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THE
HEAVENLY TOKEN:

A Gift Book for Christians.

BY D. A. HARSHA.

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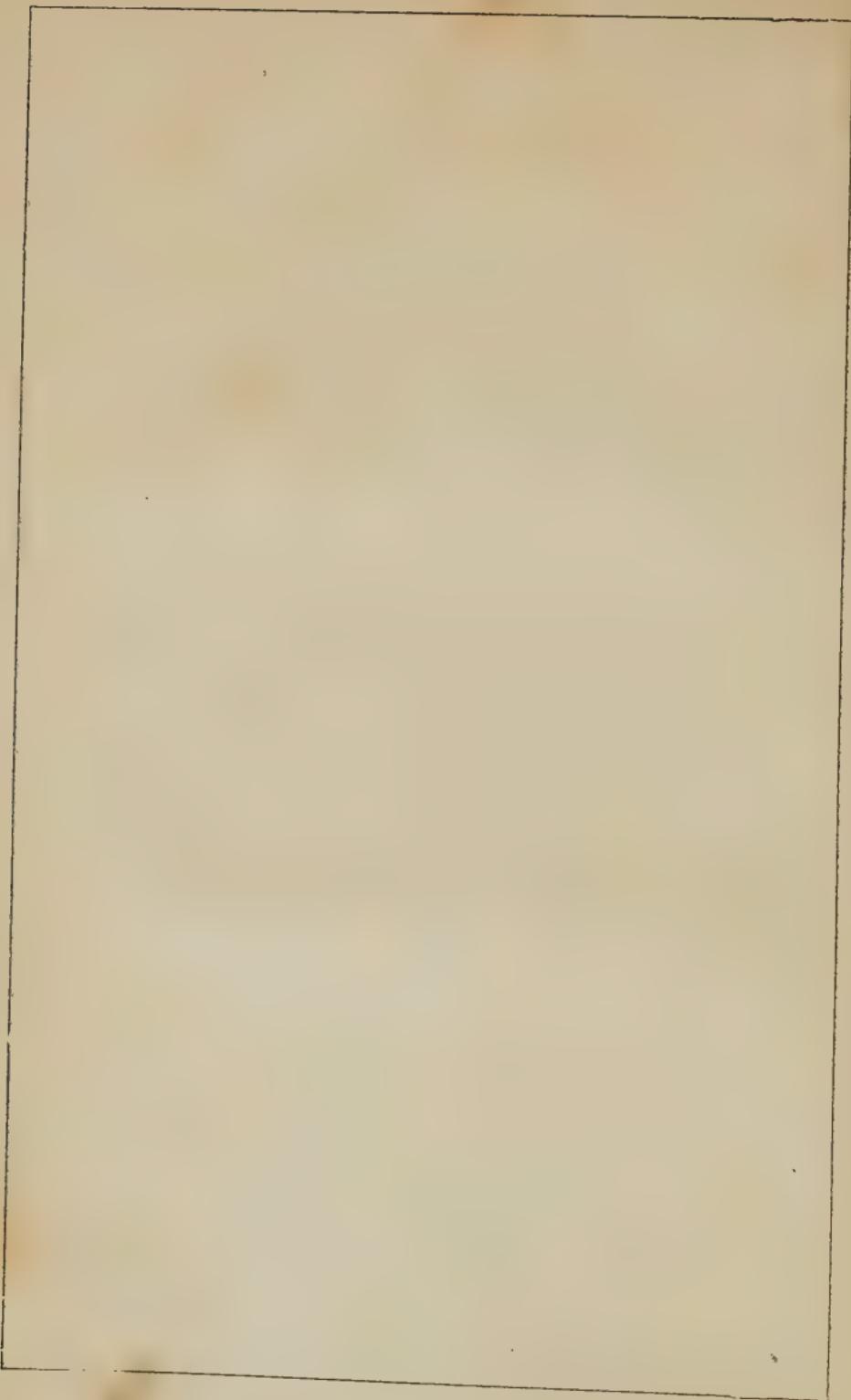
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Thoughts on the Love of Christ.



P R E F A C E.

THIS work is not designed as a systematic treatise, but as an humble essay on the great, the inexhaustible subject of the love of Christ, as manifested to a lost world.

It was composed during a long period of recovery from a chronic disease, which brought the author to the gates of death, and well nigh terminated his life.

In the present essay the author has endeavored to notice a few ways in which Christ has manifested his great love to sinners.

His object in writing this work is to do good; and should this volume be the means of leading any sinner to the blessed Jesus, or of kindling a single spark of divine love in his bosom, or even of refreshing the soul of any saint—of animating him on his way to glory—he will feel amply rewarded for the toil of writing it, when in a state of much physical inability; and most gratefully would he ascribe all the praise and glory to God. He can bless the feeblest instrument; and, without his blessing, all our labors for good must be futile.

While the author would endeavor to lead others to the

Lamb of God, to the bleeding Saviour, most humbly would he himself glory in the cross of Christ. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world;" and ever does he hope to proclaim the love and set forth the praise of that blessed Redeemer, who left the regions of glory to live and die for sinners.

"Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend;
My Prophet, Priest, and King;
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.

"Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

"Till then I would thy love proclaim,
With ev'ry fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death,"

ARGYLE, N. Y., Nov., 1856.

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THOUGHTS
ON
The Love of Christ.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

GOD designed from eternity to create this world, and people it with intelligent beings. This design was put into execution in the beginning of time. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."* He spake, and this earth, with all its multifarious occupants, started into being. It required nothing but his almighty fiat to usher a world and its inhabitants into existence. Man was created in the image of God: hence he was a holy and a happy being. Uncontaminated by moral pollution, his soul was one of purity, holiness and

* Gen. i. 1.

happiness. He was lord of this lower creation, enjoying the smiles of his beneficent Creator, and the delight of the terrestrial paradise. Primeval beauty mantled all sublunary objects. Paradise bloomed with its richest productions ; and all was peace and harmony between man and his Creator. At length man disobeyed the divine command ; sinned against God, and fell from his original blessedness, by eating the forbidden fruit,

“ Whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe.”

‘By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.’*

When we contrast man’s present deplorable condition, with his pristine state of innocence, we may well exclaim with the Prophet, “ How is the gold become dim ! how is the most fine gold changed !”† “ The crown is fallen from our head : woe unto us that we have sinned.”‡

By his fall, man lost all communion with God, and became exposed to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the wrath of God through eternity. From this sinful and lost condition he could not extricate himself, he

* Ron. v. 12.

† Lam. iv. 1

‡ Lam. v. 16.

could not redeem himself, nor pay unto God a sufficient ransom for his manifold transgressions. A broken law was to be fulfilled, the justice of God to be satisfied, and a complete atonement to be made for the sins of men, or else God and the sinner could never be reconciled.

Punishment, everlasting punishment and destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, awaited all mankind in the world of just retribution. All was forlorn; all was hopeless, forever hopeless with regard to man's redemption, had not God interposed on our behalf; to give unto us an expected end. It was the grand design of God, from all eternity, to exhibit a magnificent plan of salvation to a lost world.

And everlasting praise and thanksgiving be unto his most blessed name, that the glad tidings of this unspeakably precious salvation have reached our ears.

When there was no eye to pity sinners, nor arm to save them, God's eye pitied, and his arm alone brought salvation to them. In infinite love to lost and perishing sinners, he said, "Deliver from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."* To every redeemed sinner, God says, "When I passed by thee, and saw

* Job. xxxiii. 24.

thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live. When I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."* God did not leave all mankind to perish in their fallen, miserable and polluted condition. No! his love saved them; his wisdom devised a way by which we, polluted sinners, might be raised from the horrible pit into which our iniquities had consigned us.

"When in our blood we lay,
He would not let us die;
Because his love had fixed a day,
To bring salvation nigh."

The glorious plan of man's salvation originated in the infinite love of God the Father; and in this divine plan of redemption, the most marvellous exhibition of the love of God to hell-deserving sinners is clearly seen. Here is love, the love of God: such love as could never have been conceived of, had it not been so amply revealed and manifested in the gift of

* Ez. xvi. 6-8.

his only begotten Son. "For God so loved the world (even a world of lost sinners) that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* "God is love," and our salvation is from the God of love, and is a salvation planned and executed in deep unfathomable love. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."†

When we contemplate the greatness of God's love to sinners, we are compelled to pause, and exclaim with the admiring apostle, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."‡

Oh! the riches of divine grace! Oh! the depths of divine love. How vast, how glorious, and how adequate to the wants of perishing sinners, is the plan of mercy—of love—of salvation, which God has devised to save a lost world! It manifests the wisdom, the justice, the power, but, above all, the love of God.

* John iii. 16.

† 1 John v. 9, 10

‡ 1 John iii. 1.

"Salvation! what a glorious plan;
How suited to our need!
The grace that raises fallen man
Is wonderful indeed!"

"'Twas wisdom formed the vast design,
To ransom us when lost;
And love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost.

"Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Power and Love,
In all their glory shone,
When Jesus left the courts above,
And died to save his own."

God has chosen a portion of the human family to be the monuments of his free grace—trophies of his redeeming love; and for them he has sent his own Son to suffer and die.

In the profound depths of infinite love, the mercy of God to a lost world had its egress. Unsolicited and undeserved, it was nevertheless extended to lost sinners: sinners, guilty and polluted, are the objects upon which the mercy and love of God are profusely bestowed.

Love is God's darling attribute, which he delights to manifest most illustriously; for God is love.* And he has most singularly displayed all his love to sinful man, in the contrivance of his salvation.

* 1 John iv 8.

Oh! how immeasurably great was that love which saved a world from ruin, and raised millions of Adam's sons and daughters from eternal death and woe, to everlasting life and felicity! Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

The promise of a Great Deliverer, who should emancipate captivated man from the thraldom of sin and death, and accomplish his salvation, was early conveyed to our first parents. Before their expulsion from Paradise, when all seemed lost, a gleam of hope shone around them. It was promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; that the works of the devil should be destroyed. For this purpose, the Son of God was to be manifested in the flesh.* To the patriarchs the same promise was more amply conveyed. Abraham got a glimpse of the day of Christ, and was glad. Dying Jacob spoke of the coming of a Saviour. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."† Moses said to the children of Israel, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him ye shall hearken."‡

Isaiah, wrapped in prophetic vision, eloquently describes the advent and characteristics of the

* 1 John iii. 8.

† Gen. xlvi. 10.

‡ Deut. xviii. 15

promised Messiah. "Unto us a child is born: unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*

"Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."† All the prophets spoke of Him who was to come into the world to accomplish our salvation; "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."‡ As the time approached, the promises of a divine Saviour were multiplied. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."§

Love was the grand principle which prompted the blessed God to give his Son to die for sinners; and love was the impelling motive that brought Immanuel from his throne, to this fallen world, in order to save the lost. How great, how sublime was that scheme of his to save a perishing world! How vast was that love which enabled him to execute this plan!

* Is. ix. 6.

† Rev. xix. 10

‡ Is. vii. 14.

§ Gal. iv. 4, 5.

CHAPTER II.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN COMING INTO THE WORLD
TO SAVE SINNERS.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—
1 Tim. xi. 15.

THE gospel, as the name signifies, denotes glad tidings. This blessed gospel is sent to us: to you, reader, are these glad tidings conveyed. "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," is the best news that ever fell on the ears of a dying world. Life and immortality are brought to light through this gospel of the grace of God.

Let us now contemplate the glorious character of our blessed Redeemer, and the love which he has manifested in coming into the world to save sinners.

1. In the person of Christ, the human and divine natures are united. His divinity is clearly asserted in the Scriptures. The Redeemer of lost sinners is the eternal Son of God—equal with the Father, the Creator of the universe, the upholder of all things. Indued

with supreme power, he reigns universal Lord. All power is given to him, in heaven and earth. All worlds are his. All kingdoms are his domain. He made all things. At his command, worlds started into being. By his power all created matter is upheld in existence. He has caused the sun to shine with undiminished splendor on our globe for nearly six thousand years. It is he "that spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea; that maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."*

Open the blessed volume, and read the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, that Christ, the redeemer of sinners, is God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made, that was made."† It is a matter of great consolation for the believer who has intrusted his immortal concerns in the hands of his blessed Redeemer, to know that he is God over all, blessed forever. Let him ever bear in mind that the Saviour, who loves him, is the only begotten Son of God, and bears his very image. He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He

* Job ix. 8, 9.

† John i. 1, 3.

is clothed with divine majesty, and possesses all divine perfections, and infinite excellences. He is equal with God in all his glorious perfections.

He is called "the Lord of Glory," the "King of glory," "the mighty God," "Jehovah;" and in the Revelation he is described as having on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords."* Again, it is said of him that he "is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created with him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; and he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell."†

There is a transcendant loveliness in the person of Christ. He is "fairer than the children of men;" "the chiefest among ten thousand; yea, he is altogether lovely." What glorious and lovely attractions centre in Immanuel!

* Rev. xiv. 16.

† Col. i. 15-19.

Such is the character of Him who came into our sin-polluted world, to shed on Calvary his precious blood for the redemption of his people.

2. Christ came into the world by being manifested in the flesh, yet he lost nothing of his essential glory and dominion. He was as truly "the brightness of his Father's glory," and the owner of the universe, when in the manger, and on the cross, as he is now at the right hand of God : "Even the son of man who is in heaven." Yet out of love to sinners, he chose to suffer that glory to be veiled in humanity, and himself to be made under the law to redeem his people. What amazing love is seen here. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."* "God was manifest in the flesh."† Christ Jesus was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."‡ The advent of Christ was the signal of peace on earth. His incarnation was an event of great joy to the world. To the shepherds of Bethlehem, the glad tidings of his birth were conveyed by an angel of the Lord. To them he proclaimed : "Behold I bring you

* John i. 14.

† 1 Tim. iii. 16.

‡ Phil. ii. 7.

good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."* A new light then burst upon the world. The glorious Sun of Righteousness, emitting his resplendent rays upon kingdoms and nations involved in moral darkness, arose to enlighten, to gladden, and to bless our benighted planet. The prince of peace made his appearance. The messenger of reconciliation came, to reconcile alienated man to the friendship of his offended Creator, and fit him for the mansions of glory. When such a momentous event had occurred, when the eternal Son of God had invested himself with humanity, and become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; well might the song of the heavenly host resound among the hills of Judea, proclaiming, "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." For unto us a Saviour was born. And never was human nature so highly honored and exalted as when Christ assumed it. What blessings are bestowed upon fallen man, through the incarnation of the Son of God! Eternity alone can unfold them.

Christ came most willingly into the world to do the will of his heavenly Father. His words

* Luke ii. 10, 11.

were "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God."* Christ offered himself a willing victim upon the altar of divine wrath. He came into the world. But oh! wonderful condescension and boundless love, that Christ should come into this sinful world. On the matchless condescension and kindness of Christ, as manifested by his incarnation, a pious writer† has the following beautiful remarks: "Earthly princes are only feeble worms; their loftiest elevation is a molehill, and their brightest splendor a vain show. Yet how rarely do they descend from their thrones, to visit and relieve those who languish in the abodes of poverty and wretchedness! In our low and lost estate Jesus Christ not only saw and pitied us, but also hastened on the wings of love to bring salvation. 'He was eternally rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.'"

He was clothed with light, and surrounded with hosts of happy, adoring spirits; yet he submitted to put on our nature, and sojourn among guilty, worthless mortals.

Herein is love! love without a parallel, love that exceeds description, and passes knowledge!

* Ps. xl. 7, 8

† Thornton.

The incarnation of the only begotten Son of God is a mystery of wisdom and love, in which all our thoughts ought to be absorbed, and all our hearts with it should be enraptured. The wonders of the vast universe, could they be collected and presented to us in one view, would lose all their attraction and dwindle into insignificance, were we stedfastly to contemplate the marvellous condescension of the Redeemer, manifested in the humiliation to which he submitted on our account. When he exchanged his throne for the manger of Bethlehem, the shining host of heaven burst into that sublime song, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will to men." Here is condescension which we could not have believed possible, had it not been so clearly and amply revealed. The kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man, appeared with pre-eminent lustre in the whole of that great work which he undertook to perform for their salvation. How ardent was that love which brought the ever blessed Son of God from heaven to earth, that he might save sinners. What but infinite love could have induced him to come into the world—to be made sin for us—to bear our sins in his own body, that we might be reconciled to God, and be brought at last into

the everlasting mansions of glory, to be ever with the Lord.

Jesus Christ is love itself embodied in a human form: that form once appeared on our earth, and trod the thorny pathway from the manger to the cross, till it was seen to bleed, and groan, and die, on Calvary, for sinners as vile as we are. Reader! have you an interest in that great work which Christ, by coming into the world, has finished? Are you deeply interested in his atonement, and righteousness? Is his love shed abroad in your heart? Is he unspeakably precious to you? For, says the Apostle, "unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." Can you adopt the language of the poet, and sweetly sing,

"Sweeter sounds than music knows,
Charm me in Immanuel's name:
All her hopes my spirit owes
To his birth, and cross, and shame.

'When he came, the angels sung
'Glory be to God on high'
Lord, unloose my stamm'ring tongue:
Who shall louder sing than I?"—NEWTON.

By his coming into the world and accomplishing our salvation, Christ has opened the gates of the celestial city, through which redeemed sinners may now pass into mansions of eternal

bliss. O sinner, the gates of Paradise are now wide open for your reception; enter in and be saved. The arms of Christ are now stretched from heaven for your relief. Look up, then, with confidence to your loving Saviour. He now calls upon you from his eternal throne, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else; a just God, and a Saviour."* Sinner, have you looked to Christ for salvation? In him you will find an everlasting salvation. Everlasting salvation! precious words! It is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In the incarnation of the Son of God, we behold immeasurably great love manifested to sinners. With love unparalleled, he descends to this sinful world, and lives and dies for the redemption of his people. Love led him to forsake the regions of glory, for this dark abode of sin and suffering.

"Nothing brought him from above,
Nothing but redeeming love."

O, what love is here manifested to a guilty, rebellious world! "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

* Is. xlvi. 21, 22.

But why did he thus veil his glory in humanity, and come into this world? It was to save sinners. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*

3. To save sinners was the very object for which Messiah left his throne; for which the Son of God became incarnate. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."† "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."‡ When Christ veiled his glory, and left the regions of bliss, it was to save sinners. When he assumed mortal flesh, and became a suffering man, it was to save sinners. When he bled and died on the cross, it was to save sinners. When he burst the fetters of death, and in a glorified form ascended to heaven, it was to save sinners; and now that he is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, he is still carrying on his blessed work of saving sinners.

It was infinite love that brought Christ into the world to save sinners. What amazing love is here displayed! In man's redemption the love of Christ shines with pre-eminent lustre. In his love Christ came to save sinners, and

Tim. i. 15.

† Mat. ix. 13.

‡ Luke xix. 10

most willingly does he receive even the vilest sinner that comes to him for salvation.

Have you yet fled for refuge to the world's Redeemer? There is but one refuge provided for a lost world: Christ is that refuge. He shelters all that come to him. In him is eternal safety. Happy are they, whose hopes are fixed on him: they are safe; though all around them are changes and fluctuations, yet their rest is pitched aloft, far above this sphere of changing and perishing mortality. Onward and heavenward will be their course, and glorious will be their destiny! When Christ shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory.

Animated by the hope of immortality, look with holy contempt upon the world and all its delusive pleasures. Let a joyful eternity be ever in your view. Choose Christ as your Saviour and portion, and heaven will be your home. You will quickly glide over the tempestuous sea of life, and land on

— “the peaceful shore
Of blest eternity.”

Come, O sinner! come and intrust your salvation to the blessed Jesus, who came to save sinners. He will not cast you out. Hear his own words: “Him that cometh to me, I will in no

wise cast out."* He has a willing ear to hear your cry; a willing heart to receive you; willing arms to embrace you; almighty power to save you. O do not refuse the Lord of glory! Do not contemn the gospel message of love.

Behold your loving Saviour! See what an interest he has taken in your eternal welfare. See him laying aside the robes of his glory for you. See him, though high, becoming low; though rich, becoming poor for you: and see him coming into this world to save you. Attend to his gracious calls. Seek him instantly. May the sweet influences of Christ's redeeming love constrain you to come and partake of the joys of salvation. Salvation by Christ! Blessed gospel; well mayest thou be styled glad tidings of great joy!

In a word, I beseech you, dear reader, as you value the happiness of your immortal soul and the bliss of eternity, to make sure of your salvation. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." To-morrow may be too late. To-morrow's sun may set upon your grave. Now "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him re-

* John vi. 37.

turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”*

“Come, lepers, seize the present hour,
The Saviour’s grace to prove:
He can relieve, for he has pow’r;
He will, for he is love.”—NEWTON.

* Isa. lv. 6, 7.

CHAPTER III.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST, AS MANIFESTED IN HIS SUFFERINGS AND DEATH.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—JOHN xv. 13.

"Religion! thou the soul of happiness;
And groaning Calvary, of thee! There shine
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;
There sacred violence assaults the soul;
There nothing but compulsion is forborene.

Thou my all!

My theme! my inspiration, and my crown!
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth; my world
My light in darkness, and my life in death!
My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
Eternity too short to speak thy praise,
Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
To man of men the meanest, e'en to me!
My sacrifice! my God! What things are these?
Talk they of morals! O thou bleeding Love!
Thou maker of new morals to mankind!
The grand morality is love to thee!"

In the death of Christ, we behold the most astonishing exhibition of divine love that has ever been manifested to a lost world. Such love as is here displayed is without a precedent

—without a parallel in the annals of time or in the records of eternity. To behold the Son of God, the Maker of worlds, bowing his head on the cross, and yielding up his immaculate soul amid the agonies of death, is the most wonderful, the most affecting, the most melting sight that mortals ever witnessed. Around the Cross of Christ there shine the most resplendent rays of divine love that ever beamed from the Sun of Righteousness—that ever emanated from the Deity.

Here then is the brightest display of love, that Christ has manifested to a world of perishing sinners. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* But, oh! amazing love! that Christ breathed out his precious life, poured out his holy soul unto death, for his enemies, for the ungodly, for sinners. “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”† Christ died to save sinners: without his death, their salvation could not have been accomplished. Without the shedding of blood, there is no re-

* John xv. 13.

† Rom. v. 6-8.

mission;* and without the shedding of Christ's precious blood, not a single sinner could have been saved. The salvation of countless millions was suspended on the death of Christ; but, in love, he died to save them.

Here we may behold a little of the vastness of that love which cannot be measured, and which cannot be told. The Saviour's love met death itself in the face, and triumphed over the grave. O, my soul, look and wonder! Behold thy Saviour bleeding on the cross; bleeding from every pore, that thy sins might be washed away in the flowing stream! See him pouring out his soul unto death, for thy salvation; and ask, Is not this a manifestation of unparalleled love to thee?

O, blessed Jesus! we come far short of comprehending the greatness of thy dying love. It is a great deep. It is a fathomless ocean. May we contemplate more and more this mystery of divine love!

Christ's suffering and dying for us is a great mystery, a mystery of unfathomable love. How vehement was the love of Christ, that led him to endure death in its most terrible form, even the death of the cross! "Love is strong as death: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath

* Heb. ix. 22.

a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it."* Such is the love of Christ. All the waters of affliction and suffering; all the billows of divine wrath that rolled over our blessed Redeemer, were not sufficient to quench the ardency of that love which he felt for a dying world of sinners. It will endure through time. It will shine with undiminished splendor, and glow brighter and brighter through eternity.

Oh! the infinite love of the Son of God, to shed his precious blood for sinners. The love of Christ, in dying for sinners, passeth all knowledge. It is immeasurable. It is as incomprehensible as the duration of eternity. It is as illimitable as boundless space. "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."†

O love divine! where are thy limits? Great God! beyond the sight of mortals, and of angels? The stupendous sun, the brilliant moon, the amazing stars, the extended firmament; these have their bounds, but that love has none.

Lift up your eyes, and behold this vast world, the product of his power! See its continents,

* Cant. vii. 6, 7.

† Job xi. 8, 9.

and its oceans extending for thousands of miles: these continents may be measured; but not his love, who, though God, became man, to die for man. Sooner would those unfathomable oceans be fathomed, than the depths of his compassion.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens! Survey the countless glories of the starry firmament; all its fixed or "moving worlds of light!" Let your thoughts rove from star to star. How great is he who formed them all! How glorious he who has bid them shine with undiminished splendor through six thousand years, and to whom they are mean as a speck of flying dust! Yet he who hung out those brilliant fires stooped from his amazing height of bliss and majesty, to assume mortal flesh, and appear a feeble infant and a suffering man: Far sooner should you measure their immeasurable distances, and count their countless numbers, than tell all the vastness of his love, and the blessings it bestows. The sun is darkness compared with his superior glory who hung it in the heavens; and yet he humbled himself to the dark abodes of misery and death for guilty man.

O! when you gaze upon the blue expanse, or when the solemn stillness of night banishes from your mind the thoughts of a vain, departing world; when you behold the midnight sky and mark the thousands of its glowing fires; then

think that he who fixed them there once hung on Calvary for you, that you might shine a star, a sun, in heaven, when all those stars shall shine no more. Think that he was once mean and dishonored, stained with blood, and blue with blows, that you might have a treasure greater than a thousand worlds united, and infinitely more lasting than the countless lights which illuminate the firmament. Amazing love!*

Here we must pause, and wonder, and praise, and adore; and in the midst of our adoration, exclaim, Lord! what is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the son of man, that thou shouldst thus visit him? O blessed Jesus! thou didst visit us in love—in great mercy. Thou didst bleed thy life's blood, that we might be washed from our sins in that blood of infinite virtue. Thou didst die, that we might live. Thou didst wear a crown of thorns, that we might wear a crown of glory, and shine as stars in heaven forever.

O, to know more and more about the dying love of the Lord Jesus! The heart of Jesus is nothing but a heart of love: love to sinners, even the chief. It has been well remarked, that “were all the love of all the men that ever were

* Pike.

or shall be on the earth, and all the love of all the angels in heaven, united in one heart, it would be a cold heart to that which was pierced with the soldier's spear."* O thou loving, bleeding Lamb of God ! come, wash us in that blood which flowed from thy wounded heart, from thy pierced side ; which streamed from Calvary, a fountain of overflowing, inexhaustible depths of redeeming blood. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."† Blessed be God ! that fountain has been opened these eighteen hundred years, and is as inexhaustible as ever.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."‡ What stupendous love has Christ here manifested, in washing away the sins of a lost multitude in his own most precious blood. Well may redeemed sinners shout in songs of praise to their adorable Redeemer, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; unto him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

* Maclaurin. ... † Zech. xiii. 1. ‡ Is. Iv. 1.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Oh! the infinite efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."^{*} Through the blood of Christ, pardon and peace flow to guilty sinners. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."[†] "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."[‡] "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."[§] "He made peace through the blood of his cross."^{||} Precious blood that redeems us from eternal misery, and brings us nigh to God! "Now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."[¶] Oh! costly price of man's redemption—the precious blood of Christ. "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."^{***} "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."^{††} O, my

* 1 John i. 7. † 1 Cor. xv. 3. || Col. i. 20.

† Eph. i. 7. § Acts xii. 38. ¶ Eph. ii. 13.

** 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. †† 1 Cor. vi. 20.

soul! look with astonishment at the price paid for thy redemption—the infinitely precious blood of Christ.

Dear reader, look and live! Look at the blessed Jesus, bleeding and dying on the cross for your sins. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”*

‘Upon the cross I see him bleed,
And by the sight from guilt am freed:
This sight destroys the life of sin,
And quickens heavenly life within.’

A bleeding Saviour, seen by faith, is the sight that gives peace to the guilty, heavy-laden soul. It is the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience, that makes peace between God and the sinner.

But what intense sufferings our divine Redeemer endured, when he “bore our sins in his own body;” when he was made to be sin for us; when he suffered, the just for the unjust. As our substitute, he endured the wrath of God, and suffered for our sins. It was infinite love that led the blessed Son of God to endure all these sufferings, and, at last to submit to the

* John iii. 14, 15.

painful death of the cross. How brightly did that love shine in the last hours of his life, when he was about to bleed on Calvary ! What but infinite love led him to the garden of Gethsemane, to endure that bitter agony ; when he said, " My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death,"* and where " his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground !"† What but infinite love led him to the judgment hall, there to be derided, condemned to death, and crowned with thorns ; where " his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men !"‡ What but infinite love brought him to Calvary's mount, there to hang a suffering, bleeding victim on the cross, for our sins ?

There is nothing that shows the love of Christ like Calvary. It is there that all the rays of divine love are blended together. In that dark hour in which our Saviour hung on the cross, he showed to the world that his love was stronger than death : then he exhibited more than human love ; he manifested the infinite love of God. Amidst all his sufferings, divine love shone with the greatest lustre. Who can tell what love Christ felt for a lost world when he suffered on the cross ? Then he was about to accomplish

* Mark xiv. 34.

† Luke xxii. 41.

‡ Isa. lii. 14

our salvation ; and his love became stronger and stronger. Though he grappled with the powers of darkness, yet his arm brought salvation. He endured the hidings of his Father's countenance, till he was led to exclaim, in the bitterness of his soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?" But he made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness ; and amidst the last struggles of his holy soul, there fell from his lips in dying accents, these most blessed words—the most joyful ever conveyed to a sinner's ear, "It is finished !" Yes, your salvation, sinner, is accomplished by this wondrous death—by that divine personage who endured it.

O, look at this exhibition of love ! Was there ever such love manifested to a lost world, as is here displayed before your eyes ? Reader, contemplate Christ crucified.

How intently was the mind of the great apostle fixed on this prolific theme ! His language to the Corinthians is, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."* You also may look towards Calvary, and with the same apostle, exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ 'y whom the

* 1 Cor. ii. 2.

world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."* Blessed Jesus! we cannot comprehend the vastness of thy dying love.

"The propitiatory death of Christ," says a late pious writer,† "viewed by faith, fills and absorbs the mind, touches and melts the heart, raises and refines the affections, and completely transforms the whole character."

"Herein is love," says John; "not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins." "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."‡

Is it surprising, then, that Christ should be precious to believers? Can we see his matchless condescension, in stooping from a throne of glory, to a cross of suffering and shame; can we understand the great end of his amazing humiliation and vicarious death; can we feel the sprinkling of his peace-speaking blood upon the conscience, and not love, adore, and magnify him? "O ye cold-hearted, frozen formalists! on such a theme it is impious to be calm. Pas-

* Gal. vi. 14.

† Thornton.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

sion is reason, transport is temper, here." What can elevate and rejoice the soul, if it be unaffected with the highest manifestations of eternal love? In the death of Christ, the power, wisdom, justice, and mercy of God, shine forth in full unclouded splendor. What language can, with due force, express the tender and lively emotions which spring up in the Christian's breast as he silently muses on the delightful subject of redeeming love? O God! what is man, that thou art mindful of him? Thou didst not even spare thine own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all. Who am I, that such a price should be paid for my ransom? It was not with silver and gold, and corruptible things, that my soul was redeemed, but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Why, blessed and adorable Saviour, didst thou look in compassion on me, a worthless worm, a vile apostate, a hell-deserving rebel? O how is my soul lost in admiration and delight, when I contemplate this mystery! May thy love ever glow in my heart, and thy praise on my tongue! May I wholly live to thee, who hast died for me.

"Oh, wond'rous love! to bleed and die
To bear the cross and shame;
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name."

The death of Christ delivers us from condemnation. When a sinner, by faith, obtains a sight of the crucified One, he boldly exclaims in the face of all his enemies, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." By his death he has satisfied divine justice, and reconciled us to God; and "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."^{*} "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."[†] O, to have an interest in that atonement which Christ made for our sins! "By whom we have now received the atonement."[‡]

Reader, I would not lead you to Sinai, but to Calvary—to the Saviour's bleeding side. I would point you to the cross of Christ; to Him, who, in his great love, once suffered, and bled, and died for sinners. I would direct you to the bleeding Lamb of God, "which taketh away the sin of the world." May you behold Him with the eye of faith; even Him who so loved you, that he laid down his own life for you. Then shall the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, fill your heart. Then shall heavenly

* Rom. viii. 1.

† Rom. v 1, 9, 10.

‡ Rom. v. 11.

joys possess your renewed spirit; and one unbroken strain of praise shall, through time and eternity, arise from your purified, exalted, and enraptured soul, to Him that loved you, and washed you from your sins in his own blood.

Look at Jesus now. Have faith in his atoning blood. Endeavor to obtain a glimpse of the bleeding Saviour.

“A bleeding Saviour, seen by faith,
A sense of pard’ning love;
A hope that triumphs over death,
Give joys like those above,

“To take a glimpse within the veil;
To know that God is mine;
Are springs of joy that never fail,
Unspeakable! divine!”

The sufferings and death of the Son of God afford the most illustrious exhibition of divine love that has ever been displayed on this terrestrial globe. Here is exhibited love, such as never before shone on earth; love, surpassing human thought and comprehension. Truly, here the love of Christ passeth knowledge! What wonderful love and condescension are here manifested! Christ dying for sinners! The Son of God nailed to the cross for sinners! The blood of Immanuel flowing from Calvary for sinners!

Our blessed Saviour, " who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* O, wonderful love that made the only begotten Son of God lay down his life for sinners !

"That such a person as Christ," says an old divine,† "so excellent, so innocent, should undergo death, and such a death as that of the cross, so disgraceful, so painful ; that he should submit to such ignominy, and endure such agony, such tearing of his flesh, such pressure in his spirit, with such submission and patience, for strangers and enemies ! Here was love, stronger than death. Oh ! the height, oh ! the depth of this love ! There are such dimensions in this love of Christ, as the longest line of our most extended thoughts and imaginations can never be able to reach and measure."

What amazing love did Christ manifest, when he, who was the brightness of his Father's glory, exchanged that crown of glory which he wore in heaven, for a crown of thorns on

* Phil. ii. 6-8.

† Vincent.

earth, and bled, and died on the cross for guilty man!

Sinner, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Contemplate your divine Redeemer, who has shed his precious blood to save your soul from eternal misery. In love he died to save you. O, then, contemplate this loving Saviour in his sufferings and death!

"Think how on the cross he hung,
Pierc'd with a thousand wounds!
Hark, from each, as with a tongue,
The voice of pardon sounds!
See, from all his bursting veins,
Blood of wondrous virtue flow!
Shed to wash away thy stains,
And ransom thee from woe."

Sinner, flee to Christ. He will receive you joyfully, and save you with an everlasting salvation. He will rejoice over you with great joy. He is a loving Saviour, and he loves to save sinners. He, "for the joy that was set before him," (the joy of saving sinners,) "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is" now "set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."†

* Heb. xii. 2.

† Heb. vii. 25.

Come, now, and put your trust in this Saviour. Leave with him your immortal concerns. Intrust fearlessly your whole salvation to him. Think not that he will reject you, if you essay to cast your sin-burthened soul into his compassionate arms. His atonement is all-sufficient. He saves to the very uttermost. Despair not; only come and commit your soul to Christ, and salvation is yours.

There is an infinite efficacy in the precious blood of Christ, to cleanse you from all sin. Blessed be God! that blood which washes away the deepest stains, has been shed; and that atonement which expiates the greatest guilt, has been made. God now says to us, in language the most strong and encouraging, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."*

In the contemplation of our salvation, well may we exclaim with the prophet, "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it! Shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."†

Blessed Jesus! It is from thy death that we

* Is. xliv. 22.

Is. xliv. 23.

derive eternal life and blessedness. How should our hearts glow with love to thee, and sound with the high praises of our God! "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord: my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."*

Reader, are you deeply interested in the atonement and righteousness of Christ? Then go forward in your pilgrimage journey with joy; leaning upon Jesus, the beloved of your soul. "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."† "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."‡ With their robes washed white in the blood of the Immanuel, invested with his spotless, perfect righteousness, the saints shall at last be presented before God, a faultless church; and the redeeming love of Christ constituting their unending theme, shall engage their enlarged and exalted faculties, and

* Is. lxi. 10.

† Eph. v. 2.

‡ Eph. v. 25-27.

employ their ransomed souls in holy meditations through the everlasting sabbath of eternity.

Sinner, resort forthwith to the fountain of the Redeemer's blood, while it is yet open. Come, without delay: "Wash, and be clean." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* If you thus come to the fountain of living water, you will be able to adopt the language of Cowper, and say—

There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plung'd beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoic'd to see
That fountain in his day;
And here have I, as vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away.

Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its pow'r,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be sav'd, to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy pow'r to save;
When this poor lisping, stamm'ring tongue,
Lies silent in the grave.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONTEMPLATED.

"And to know the love of Christ."—EPHESIANS iii. 19.

ON no other subject did the mind of the apostle Paul dwell with so much delight, as on that of the redeeming love of Christ. This was his favorite theme. It was his ardent desire to exhibit to a lost world the grace of the Lord Jesus, which had been so abundantly manifested to himself, once a great sinner. It was the love of Christ that sustained him amidst all his trials, and distresses, and persecutions, and enabled him to finish a glorious career.

Neither the threats of the Jews, nor the terror of the Romans, could separate him from the love of Christ, or in the least abate his zeal for spreading the news of salvation, and the wonders of redeeming love through a lost world.

Writing to the Romans, he boldly exclaims: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the

day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

The same apostle, writing to the Ephesians, desires and prays that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they being rooted and grounded in love, “may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”

Let us contemplate the love of Christ in all its extent, and in all its vastness. When did it commence? In the past eternity. The love of Christ to his people extends from eternity. Though it was manifested in time, yet it existed from eternity. “Then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.”*

Christ says to each of his chosen ones,

* Rom viii. 35-39

* Prov. viii. 30, 31.

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee."*

Oh! wonderful thought, everlasting love! Who can comprehend the import of these words, everlasting love? Christ loves us, and his love is everlasting. Yes, dear believer, Christ loved you before the world was created; before you had an existence. From all eternity he thought upon your lost condition by nature; and oh! how willingly, how gladly, he left the throne of glory to bring salvation to you. His love never had a beginning. "This river of love began to flow before the world was; from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Christ's love to us is as old as the Father's love to the Son. This river of light began to stream from Jesus towards us, before the beams poured from the sun; before the rivers flowed to the ocean; before angel loved angel, or man loved man: before creatures were, Christ loved us. This is a great deep; who can fathom it? This love passeth knowledge."†

The love of Christ will reach into eternity; will extend throughout its immeasurable ages: it has no end. This is the sweet declaration of Christ, with regard to his love, that "the moun-

* Jer. xxxi. 3.

† M'Cheyne.

tains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”*

O, to be among that happy number, who will enjoy in heaven the eternal favor of Christ’s love, which will make eternity itself one joyous unclouded day of everlasting light and immortal felicity!

Blessed Jesus! Interest each of us in thy unchanging loving-kindness, which is better than life. O, let one ray of thy most wonderful love light on our benighted hearts: soften them by the manifestation of thy grace.

Of the vastness of the love of Christ, we can form no adequate conceptions; much less can we, by any power of the understanding, comprehend it. To use the emphatic language of an old divine,† “it is as if a child could take the globe of earth and sea in his two short arms.” The love of Christ is like a great ocean, whose depths are unfathomable. There is a height in this love, to which no human intelligence can soar; a depth which no created mind can penetrate.

In viewing the love of Christ, there lies a

* Is. liv. 10.

† Samuel Rutherford.

wide unbounded prospect before us. The mental vision wanders at liberty over this illimitable range. The love of Christ is circumscribed by no limits; it is bounded by no horizon: it is one vast expanse in which the soul may lose itself in wonder, delight, and admiration.

The pious M'Cheyne, whom we have already quoted, has the following beautiful remarks on the love of Christ. "Paul says: 'The love of Christ passeth knowledge.' It is like the blue sky into which you may see clearly, but the real vastness of which you cannot measure. It is like the deep, deep sea, into whose bosom you can look a little way, but its depths are unfathomable. It has a breadth without a bound, length without top, and depth without bottom. If holy Paul said this, who was so deeply taught in divine things; who had been in the third heaven, and seen the glorified face of Jesus; how much more may we, poor and weak believers, look into that love, and say, It passeth knowledge!"

If we cannot comprehend the love of Christ; if we cannot fathom it, let us contemplate and admire it.

It was the love of Christ that led him to assume human nature, in order that he might suffer and die, and thus atone for the sins of his people: it was this love that induced him to

leave the bosom of his Father, and the adoration of the angelic host, and to sojourn among guilty worthless mortals.

It was love that led him to exchange the throne of glory for the manger of Bethlehem and the cross of Calvary. It was love that made his whole life, from the manger to the cross, one of grief and sorrow. Love made him “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”

Well might the blessed Jesus have exclaimed, “Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.”* It was love that made him suffer and die for sinners. Yes, love led him to the gloomy garden of Gethsemane; love drew him to the judgment hall; love nailed him to the cross; and love enabled him to exclaim with his expiring breath, “It is finished.”

“Greater love hath no man than this.” The love of Christ is wonderful love: it is surpassing, boundless love. Look at that amazing love which Christ has manifested to sinners; and may you be able to comprehend with all saints what is its breadth, and length, and depth, and height!

When you intently contemplate that redeem-

* Lam. i. 12.

ing love which brought Christ from his throne, to live and suffer, and die for sinners, does not your breast heave with emotions of gratitude; does not your soul rise in adoration, and is it not lost in wonder, love, and praise?

Have you a heart so cold as not to be warmed by such unbounded love; a heart so hard as not to be softened by such grace as is here set before the eyes of a wondering world?

No feeble mortal can express the vastness of the love of Christ to sinners! It is a mystery which eternity itself will never fully unravel. "God only knows the love of God." We know that it is great love, and that it is manifested to sinners, but it is love too boundless for the most capacious mind to grasp. None can comprehend its vastness: none can measure its immensity; language fails to describe it; human thought cannot fathom it; time cannot disclose its depths; and vast eternity itself will roll away in its continual and delightful contemplation.

How transcendent is the love of Christ! It passeth knowledge.

O my soul, art thou not lost in wonder and admiration when thou contemplatest this divine love—the love of Jesus? And love so amazing, love so boundless as the love of Christ, should call forth all our loftiest strains of praise, and exercise our highest powers of mind in devout

contemplations. It should be the constant theme of our meditation here, till we come to possess its full and eternal enjoyment in that world where all is love. And if we possess the love of Christ on earth, it will cheer our hearts, brighten our prospects, alleviate our sorrows, mitigate our afflictions, and emit a ray of hope that will enable us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in this vale of tears.

To be the object of Christ's love is desirable, and it is a blessed attainment to know that you enjoy it; to say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* There is nothing so much calculated to drive from sin, or excite to good works, as a ray of the love of Christ darting into the sinner's heart: this will more effectually melt it, than all the terrors of the law, or the thunders of Sinai.

The love of Christ fills the soul with immortal joys. There is nothing so reviving to the believer, as the sweet thought of Christ's love to him.

There is no subject stored with such an exub-

* Gal ii. 20.

erance of divine consolation, and heavenly joy, as that of redeeming love—the love of the Son of God to a lost world. Every other subject loses its lustre when contrasted with this sublime, soul-reviving theme; and nothing tends so effectually to expand, elevate, and purify the soul, as that faith “which worketh by love.” And what do we not owe to the love of Christ? All the comforts and happiness of life, and all the joys of a blissful eternity flow from this love.

You should meditate much upon the love of Christ; and may that love ever glow within you, and be like a perpetual fire burning upon the altar of your heart. “The love of Christ is a subject too lofty for a seraph’s harp. The soul, renewed by the spirit, is often incapable of expressing the sublime feelings which pass through the mind, when thinking on this glorious subject. The love of Christ conveys a joy to the believer’s heart, which is unspeakable and full of glory. The tongue cannot express the delight of heart which arises from the manifestation of this love.

“The joy of harvest, the joy of the bridegroom on his wedding day; the joy of victory, and taking great spoils from the enemy; the joy of a poor man in finding great treasures; all these are not worthy to be compared with the

joy and exultation of the believer's heart, on the manifestation of this love to his soul."*

What does the blessed Jesus deserve for such unbounded love to sinners? All our hearts should be devoted to his service, and all our affections should be placed upon him. We should love him, because he first loved us. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."† O to be made like the adorable Redeemer, and to praise him throughout the countless ages of eternity, for the wonders of his redeeming love! May this be the desire of every reader; and may each be enabled to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee!"‡

"One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of Friend:
His is love beyond a brother's;
Costly, free, and knows no end.
They who once his kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love.

"Which of all our friends to save us,
Could or would have shed their blood?
But our Jesus died to have us
Reconciled, in him to God;
This was boundless love indeed
Jesus is a friend in need."—NEWTON.

CHAPTER V.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN THE BESTOWMENT OF GRACE,
IN THE GIFT OF HIS WORD, AND IN THE INSTITU-
TION OF DIVINE ORDINANCES.

"The Lord will give grace."—PSALM lxxxiv. 11.

"I have given them thy word."—JOHN xvii. 14.

"He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."—EPH.
iv. 11, 12.

"THE Lord will give grace."* But will he give grace to sinners? Yes, to great sinners. Paul was the chief of sinners, and yet to him was the grace of the Lord Jesus manifested. He asserts, concerning himself, that "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."†

Oh! what surpassing, boundless love, has Christ manifested to sinners! And on millions of Adam's lost and guilty race, who were once as vile as sin could make them, has he in his great love bestowed his boundless grace. It is his love that makes sinners saints, and distinguishes them from the rest of mankind; and

* Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

† 1 Tim. i. 14.

every sinner that will enter heaven's gates, must first feel the constraining influence of this love. How sweet are the words, "By grace (without merit) ye are saved!" Here is an overflowing fountain of divine consolation for guilty sinners. What wonderful love is here manifested to us!

"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus."*

This grace is greatly celebrated by prophets, and apostles, and saints. Paul cries, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." The Psalmist exclaims, "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." A good man says, "Nothing but free grace makes

* Eph. ii. 4-7. "Most amazingly rich mercy! most astonishingly great love! When dead in sins, blinded by pride to our wretchedness, and full of enmity against God and goodness, even then he loved us with great love, and of rich mercy quickened us. O look at, live and feed upon this rich mercy and great love. Oh! to grace what mighty debtors."—MASON.

any difference between me and the vilest of sinners." One says, "I know no sweeter way to heaven, than through free grace and hard trials together; and where grace is, hard trials are seldom wanting." Another says, "Two things I chiefly know: one is, that I am a great sinner; the other is, that Jesus Christ is a great Saviour. O the riches of divine grace!"

When Christ shall bring forth the headstone of his living, glorious temple, all the redeemed shall shout "Grace, grace, unto it."* Grace is glory begun, glory is grace perfected. Grace is the first degree of glory. The Lord will give grace and glory too. O what precious words! who can weigh their import?

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come:
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

* Zech. iv. 7.

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures ;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

"Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A life of joy and peace.

"The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine ;
But God, who called me here, below,
Will be forever mine."—NEWTON.

As soon as sinners are brought into a state of grace, they have need of continual spiritual instruction; and such instruction, Christ in his love has afforded them. He has given them his word. He has favored them with the means of grace, and with the institution of divine ordinances. In the gift of his word, Christ has manifested great love to his people. Whilst journeying through this bleak, arid, wilderness world, to mansions of glory, he refreshes their souls with the bread of life, and with the living waters of salvation. The word of God, and the ordinances of his grace, afford them abundant provisions by the way.

What transcendent love has the blessed Jesus manifested in giving us this unspeakably precious treasure, the holy Scriptures, in which are

contained such inexhaustible stores of rich grace. The whole Bible is an epistle of love, unspeakable love, to perishing sinners. It unfolds the way of salvation ; it proclaims a risen, glorified Saviour ; it points to the Lamb of God ; it is full of Christ, full of immortal love ; it leads the sinner to glory. O then, may this precious treasure, this precious volume be yours, be mine, to guide us through this dark, bewildering scene of sin and sorrow, to a brighter world above. "Thy word," says the psalmist, "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*

How highly has the word of God been prized by every Christian pilgrim, by every traveller to Zion : it was David's comfort in his affliction ; it was his song in the house of his pilgrimage. "This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me." "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."†

How precious was the holy law of God, to this eminent saint, Israel's sacred bard ! Hear him exclaim, "O, how I love thy law ! it is my meditation all the day." "Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart." "Therefore I love thy

* Psalm cxix. 105.

† Psalm cxix. 50, 54.

commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." "Consider how I love thy precepts." "My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and I love them exceedingly."*

Reader, may you also love the word of God, and may it ever be your greatest delight to read its sacred pages. You cannot prize this blessed book sufficiently. Blessed Jesus, what do we not owe thee for the gift of this precious volume!

"Let everlasting thanks be thine,
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

"My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of him I love;
Till glory breaks upon my view,
In brighter worlds above."—COWPER.

In his love, Christ "has given unto us exceeding great and precious promises."† May you ever contemplate these "precious promises;" and may your prayer be, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." If you are a believer, you

* Psalm cxix.

† 2 Pet. i. 4.

will love and value the word of God ; you will meditate much on it. It is true of a righteous man, that “ his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”* On a dying bed, you will not regret having spent too much time in the study of the Scriptures, but you may lament that you had not devoted more of your time to the diligent perusal of the divine pages. When Salmasius, one of the most consummate scholars of his age, came to die, he exclaimed, “ O ! I have lost a world of time ! time, the most precious thing in the world ! whereof had I but one year more, I would spend it in reading David’s Psalms and Paul’s Epistles.” The immortal John Locke, when asked which was the surest way for a young man to attain a knowledge of the Christian religion, replied, “ Let him study the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament : therein are contained the words of eternal life ; it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.”

It is from the Bible that we obtain that knowledge, which will guide us to the abodes of immortality which will lead us to the glory and honor that will endure when sun and stars have

* Psalm i. 2.

lost their light. Then study the word of God. "It embodies all," says an eloquent living writer, "that a Christian in this pilgrimage can need: it is his only chart through this tempestuous life; in trouble, it is his consolation; in prosperity, his monitor; in difficulty, his guide; amid the darkness of death, and while descending into the shadowy valley, it is the day-star that illuminates his path, makes his dying eye bright with hope, and cheers his soul with the prospect of immortal glory."*

Always remember the divine admonition of our blessed Saviour, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."†

And "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."‡ Let the language of your heart ever be,

"May this blest volume ever lie
Close to my heart, and near mine eye;
Till life's last hour my soul engage,
And be my chosen heritage."

In the institution of the ordinances of grace, Christ has manifested the tenderest love and concern for the spiritual welfare of his people

* Rev. Dr. Waterbury.

† Col. iii. 16.

‡ John v. 39.

while in this world. In his love, "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ."*

A preached Gospel is the gift of Christ—a gift of love to a lost world. The Redeemer's last command, was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."† This blessed gospel, Christ in his love has sent to us. The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage.‡

Blessed be God! that the glad tidings of life and salvation, through a crucified Redeemer, have reached our ears. O, happy they, whose lot is cast within the joyful sound of the glorious gospel! "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."§ "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee."|| What a blessed privilege is it, that we enjoy, of entering into the house of God, with voices of joy and praise! Let us prize this privilege, and let us love to dwell in the house of God. How ardently did David love the sanctuary of God! "Lord, I

* Eph. iv. 11, 12.

† Mark xvi. 15.

‡ Psalm xvi. 6.

§ Psalm lxxxix. 15.

|| Psalm lxxxiv. 4.

have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth."* "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."† To David, no spot on earth was so dear as Zion's holy hill; no service so sweet as that of divine worship. How highly should you, who live amidst the meridian splendor of Christianity, prize the means of grace which you enjoy! With the Psalmist may you exclaim from the heart, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."‡

In the institution of the sacramental supper, Christ has afforded a grand exhibition of love. In his love, yea in his dying love, he instituted it. The Lord's Supper is the sweetest of all ordinances; it is, emphatically, a feast of love. The very banner that Christ unfurls over the head of every believing communicant, is love, love written in such legible characters that he who runs may read. "He brought me to the

* Psalm xxxvi. 8.

† Psalm xxvii. 4.

‡ Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 10.

banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."* With what joy does the redeemed sinner approach this sacred table, that he may commemorate the dying love of his blessed Saviour! His language is, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."†

This ordinance, exhibiting as it does a crucified Saviour, vividly displays the vastness of redeeming love and the riches of divine grace. A loving Saviour has spread this table for us, and he cries, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."‡ What blessings are here provided for dying sinners? the bread of life, the waters of salvation, remission of sins; yea, an abundant pardon, peace with God, a meetness for heaven!

Come and show your love to Christ, at this feast of love; remember, and obey his dying injunction, "This do in remembrance of me." Can you lay any claim to the name of a Christian, while you live in the utter neglect of this duty? Surely not. The love of Christ should constrain you to observe it. Surely it becomes a ransomed captive, a captive bought at such an inestimable price, to testify his obligations to his loving Re-

* Cant. ii. 5.

† Cant. ii. 3.

‡ Cant. v. 1.

deemer! "Come, for all things are now ready."* Come to the Lord's table, and behold the most amazing love manifested to you, the infinite love of the dying Son of God!

O Blessed Jesus! may it be our delight, on earth to confess and own thee as our divine Redeemer before men, and to commemorate thy dying love in this sweet ordinance. Refreshed by that spiritual provision, which thou hast laid up for us in the gospel of thy grace, may we press onward in our pilgrimage journey heavenward; and at last realize the joys of a blessed home in the world of glory.

Dear believer, we shall soon exchange the table below for the table above. Jesus, our divine Redeemer, himself shall be at the head of that table, and shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Till then, let us endeavor to be profited by all those means of grace, with which Christ in his love has favored us. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."†

* Luke xv' 17.

† 2 Pet. iii. 18.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN AFFLICTIONS.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—HEB. xii. 6.

"Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward."—JOB v. 6, 7.

AFFLICITION comes upon all. None are exempt from the sufferings incident to our fallen nature. The young, the old, the rich and the poor, alike feel the withering touch of affliction and of sorrow. Disease invades the strongest constitution, and affliction prostrates the mightiest energy. Often those in the prime and vigor of life are laid down on the bed of sickness, and made to feel that they are dying creatures. How true it is, that "man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble!"*

The children of God are not exempted from the afflictions of this life; but it is their blessed consolation to know that they have a Friend to sympathize with them in all their sorrows and

* Job xiv. 1.

sufferings, while in this mortal state. Yes, Jesus is that friend, who watches over their sick beds, and consoles their desponding spirits amid the frailty of sinking nature. Oh! how often does the blessed Jesus wonderfully manifest his love to his afflicted ones! How often does he whisper words of peace and love and consolation in their ears! How often, on the manifestation of his love, do their souls overflow with joy, even when their bodies are racked with severe pain!

Christ will always make that promise good, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be;" and amidst all our trials and afflictions here, we may rely with unshaken confidence on the promises of our loving Redeemer, who will not forsake us in the hour of extremity. Then he will manifest his love to us, and display the riches of his grace. In all our trials, his promise runs thus: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

All the afflictions of the children of God are designed for their good. They come from a kind heavenly Father, from a God of love; and one of their designs is, the purification and sanctification of believers. "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin."† "By this,

* 2 Cor. xii. 9.

† Is. i. 25.

therefore, shall all the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin."* "Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end."† "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried."‡

Afflictions make us meet for glory: they enable us to obtain a correct view of the vanity of terrestrial happiness; they tend, through grace, to fix our souls on Him, in whom alone we can find true happiness and immortal joys. Happy sickness, that leads the soul to Jesus, the only source of blessedness!

Afflictions, then, promote our spiritual welfare, and are ordered for our good. It is expressly declared, "that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;"§ and afflictions are among the "all things" that are beneficial to the present and eternal welfare and happiness of God's children. Afflicted believer, Christ says to you, "What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."|| You will soon know the merciful design, which Christ had in afflicting you. In the light of

* Is. xxii. 9.

† Dan. xi. 35.

‡ Dan. xii. 10

§ Rom. viii. 28.

John xiii. 7.

eternity, you will look back and say that he has brought you by a way that is right.

In their afflictions here, Christ manifests most tender love to believers: he renews their fainting souls, by the manifestation of his love and the revelation of his grace; he strengthens them inwardly. "In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul."*

It was the manifestation of the love and grace of the Lord Jesus, that supported the Apostle Paul amidst all his afflictions. "For which cause," says he, "we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."†

How greatly will our light afflictions and trials here, add to the weight of that crown of glory, which we shall wear hereafter! How will they sweeten that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God, our happy home in heaven!

* Ps. cxxxviii. 3.

† Cor. iv. 16, 18.

Were the sun of prosperity always to shine upon us, we would soon forget our Father's house, our heritage above. Christ sends us afflictions to tell us that this is not our rest, that our blessed home is far above this scene of perishing mortality. Here, we must be fitted for glory ; and Christ says to his followers, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."* It is through much tribulation that we must enter into the kingdom of God. Of that happy throng who stand around the throne of the Eternal, it is said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."†

The way to Mount Zion lies through the valley of Baca. The road to glory is a rough one. Believers may exclaim with the Psalmist, "Thou, O God, hast proved us : thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net ; thou laidest affliction upon our loins ; thou hast caused men to ride over our heads ; we went through fire and water ; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."‡ But when we come to that wealthy place, even to the heavenly Canaan, we will find that it will make amends for all our momentary afflictions

* John xvi. 33.

† Rev. vii. 14.

‡ Psalm lxvi. 10-12.

on earth · that one hour with Christ in glory,
will make us forget a lifetime of suffering.

“ Though rough and thorny be the road,
It leads thee home, apace, to God :
Then count thy present trials small,
For heaven will make amends for all.”

Even now, when we are travelling through this vale of tears to mansions of glory, we have our comforts and enjoyments. The love of Christ sweetens every affliction ; turns the darkest night of adversity into the light of day, and the saddest night of weeping into the morning of joy. Come afflictions, come trials, come whatever may, we are assured that all things shall work together for our good.

Reader, are you afflicted ? Is it sanctified to you ? If so, look upon it as an evidence of Christ’s love. Let it ever be remembered, that “ Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”* And again, “ Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”† The Lord afflicts his people, because he loves them. “ As many as I love,” says Christ, “ I rebuke and chasten.”‡ He does it “ for our profit, that we might be partakers

* Heb. xii 6.

† Prov. iii. 12

‡ Rev. iii. 19.

of his holiness." And though now, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."^{*} Afflictions are often sent to arrest the wanderer in his course, and to bring him back to God. Many a child of God can say with David, who had often been tried and made to pass through the furnace of affliction, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."[†]

Afflictions are also designed for the conversion of sinners. Thousands have been chosen in the furnace of affliction. Oh! how many saints of God, in every age, can witness to the truth of these words: "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."[‡] How many careless sinners, under the softening touch of affliction, have been brought to Jesus, and have found peace in his atoning blood! How many, without the saving knowledge of Christ, have

* Heb. xii. 10, 11.

† Psalm. cxix. 67, 71, 75.

‡ Is. xlvi. 10.

been cast on beds of sickness, and there made, for the first time, to feel that Jesus is precious ! Then they enjoyed his love, received his grace, and knew by experience that the Lord is gracious. Then affliction became light, Christ precious, and heaven sweet. The manifestation of a Saviour's love dispelled every gloom, and heavenly light irradiated their souls.

In affliction, Christ manifests the tenderest love to his people, and then it is that they get a glimpse of his matchless perfections. He is always near them, and "in all their affliction he is afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves them."*

How happy are they to whom the love of Christ is manifested in affliction ; in whose hearts the love of God is shed abroad ; and who are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory ! Such are enabled to say, with an experienced apostle, " We glory in tribulations also ; knowing that tribulation worketh patience ; and patience, experience ; and experience, hope ; and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."†

A young lady who had lain on a bed of sickness for many months, once declared to the

* Is. lxiii. 9.

† Rom. v. 3-5.

writer, that she would rather suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Whence arose this resignation to the will of God, amidst extreme sufferings? From the manifestation of Christ's love; from that love being shed abroad in her heart.

"How often does Christ manifest his dearest love to his suffering ones," said an eminent saint* of other days, during her sickness. "Blessed be God for all his mercies, and for this comfort in my affliction. O, how many mercies I have! I want for nothing. Hitherto I can say, the Lord is gracious. He has been very merciful to me, in sustaining me under all my trials. The Lord brings affliction, but it is not because he delights to afflict his children; it is at all times for our profit. I can say it has been good for me to be afflicted; it has enabled me to discern things, which, when I was in health, I could not perceive. It has made me know more of the vanity and emptiness of this world, and all its delusive pleasures: for at best they are but vanity."

Said an amiable and devoted young minister† in his last sickness, "I do not consider my circumstances melancholy or painful. I am very

* Hannah Housman.

† Rev Thomas Rawson Taylor, late of Bradford in York-shire.

mercifully dealt with. My passage to the tomb is easy. I have comparatively little suffering, and I enjoy that peace of God which passeth all understanding. I can truly say, that goodness and mercy have followed me all my days, including these suffering days: and looking upwards to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, I can also add, ‘I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.’” Thus afflictions work for our good, and qualify us for the joys and bliss of heaven.

And now, afflicted reader, remember the divine exhortation, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.”* “Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for he maketh sore and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.”† “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with his sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? but if he be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.”‡ Dear believer, the time is short. Your afflictions are nearly over.§

* Heb. xiii. 5.

† Job. v. 17, 18.

‡ Heb. xii. 7, 8.

§ “A few more trials; a few more tears; a few more days of darkness, and we shall be forever with the Lord. ‘In this tabernacle we groan, being burdened.’ All dark things

“ Be still, my soul, and know the Lord ;
In meek submission wait his will,
His presence can true peace afford,
His power can shield from every ill.

“ Thy path is strewed with piercing thorns ;
Each step is gained by arduous fight,
Yet wait, till hope’s bright morning dawns,
Till darkness changes into light.

“ Soon shall the painful conflict cease ;
Soon shall the raging storm be o’er ;
Soon shalt thou reach the realms of peace,
Where suffering shall be known no more.

“ There shall thy joy forever flow
In one unbroken stream of bliss ;
There shalt thou God the Saviour know,
And feel him thine as thou art his.”

Cleave closely to Jesus ; you shall soon see him as he is ; then your afflictions, and trials, and days of mourning will have ended ; you shall reign with Jesus, and be like him. The Lord having now “ begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

shall yet be cleared up ; all sufferings healed ; all blanks supplied ; and we shall find fulness of joy (not one drop wanting) in the smile and presence of our God. It is one of the laws of Christ’s kingdom. ‘ We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’ We must not reckon upon a smooth road to glory, but it will be a short one.”—MCHEYNE

* Phil. i. 6.

Sanctified afflictions are fitting you for heaven. "Blessed is the man whom thou chasatest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked."*

Choose Christ now, and you may rest assured that goodness and mercy shall follow you through life, and glory and immortality crown you at death. You will enjoy the love of Christ in health, and in sickness, and when you come to feel your last pain, and draw your last breath, you will shout forth, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

* Psalm xciv. 12, 13

† 1 Cor. xv 55, 57.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST, AS MANIFESTED TO HIS PEOPLE
IN THE HOUR OF DEATH.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."—PSALM xxiii, 4.

"And when the closing scenes prevail,
When wealth, state, pleasure, all shall fail;
All that a foolish world admires,
Or passion craves or pride inspires;
At that important hour of need,
Jesus shall prove a friend indeed:
His hand shall smooth thy dying bed,
His arm sustain thy drooping head;
And when the painful struggle's o'er,
And that vain thing, the world, no more—
He'll bear his humble friend away,
To rapture and eternal day."

IT is a solemn truth that you and I must die. Death will soon overtake us. Before the termination of the present year; yea, before the sun shall have again passed the horizon, the hand that now writes these lines, and the eye that now reads them, may both have felt the chill of death.

Oh, what is human life? A vapor; a dream;

a tale that is soon told; a feeble spark of vitality, emitting its light for a moment, and then forever extinguished! "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days: he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."^{*} "My days," says Job, "are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. O remember that my life is wind!"[†]

Our continuance on earth is but for a short moment. "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."[‡] "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more."^{||} "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."[§] How short, how uncertain is life; but how certain is death!

How true it is that God will bring us to death, and to the house appointed for all living.[¶] "It is appointed unto men once to die."^{**} Millions have fallen before the irresistible stroke of death.

* Job xiv. 1, 2.

|| Psalm cii. 15, 16.

† Job vii. 6, 7,

§ James iv. 14.

‡ 1 Chron. xxix. 15.

¶ Job xxx. 23.

Heb. ix, 27.

All mankind are dying creatures, and are pressing onward to the grave.

Reflect upon the past history of mortality. "Generation after generation," says a beautiful writer, "have passed away. Time was, when they were alive upon the earth, and active amid its busy scenes. They had their joys and their sorrows. They flitted across life's busy stage, and disappeared forever behind the curtain of mortality. They have gone. The winds of centuries have swept over their graves."

As it was with them, so it will soon be with us. Look at the future. It is computed that eight hundred millions constitute the population of our globe: these, in less than a century, will all be lodged in the grave. The grave receives alike as its victims the inmate of the cottage, and him who sits on his throne and sways the sceptre of nations. The paths of glory and honor lead but to the grave. Here come the nobles with their titles, kings with their crowns, and scholars with their volumes. Here is the home of the mighty hero, who once with his steel-clad millions thundered over the field of battle, and with an arm of power shook the foundations of kingdoms.

"How populous, how vital is the grave!
This is creation's melancholy vault."

O look at the brevity and vanity of human life, and learn a solemn lesson. Though you have soared in fame, or have accumulated wealth in abundance; though you glory in human power, and, like Alexander, could ride triumphantly over the ruins of desolated nations, yet the time will soon have arrived when the feeble tenement of clay shall moulder, leaving its only epitaph upon the crumbling marble; when it may be pronounced, over your mortal remains:

"How loved, how valued once, avails thee not;
To whom related, or by whom begot:
A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
'Tis all thou art, and all the great shall be."

But death does not annihilate our existence. We are immortal beings. Human life is but a prelude to an immortal state of being. As we close our eyes on the visionary scenes of time, we open them amid the solemn realities of eternity; we enter upon that life which will never end. To die, then, is but to live.

Oh! how important it is that we should become interested in the atonement of Christ; that we may find redemption in his blood, and for giveness of sins, that we may die in peace.

All must tread along the dark valley. All must cross the Jordan of death. But the humble follower of Christ is, through grace, enabled

to exclaim, as he approaches the dreadful precipice that hides the view of mortality : “ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.”*

Christ’s presence is with believers in the hour of death ; he cheers their departing spirits. They have fled for refuge to him, and he sustains them in their trying hour. Then he is a friend indeed ; a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. This love is manifested to them : it enables them to shout forth triumphantly, in the face of the last enemy, “ O, death, where is thy sting ? O, grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”† It is to the believer in Jesus, and to him alone, that death comes disarmed of his terrors ; being only a faithful messenger to convey him to his dear Lord and Saviour : so that in the prospect of dissolution, he can express a desire with Paul, “ To depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”‡ He knows that Christ is his loving friend, that he is watching over his dying bed, ready to receive his departing spirit, and he can confidently say with Stephen, “ Lord Jesus, re-

* Psalm xxiii. 4.

† 1 Cor. xv. 55-57.

‡ Phil. i. 23

ceive my spirit;”* with David, “Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth;”† “I will behold thy face in righteousness: I will be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness;”‡ and with Simeon, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”§

Such is the peaceful end of the Christian’s mortal career. He dies in peace. He passes the swellings of Jordan, cheered by the Saviour’s presence, and animated by the manifestation of his love. It is in the trying hour of death, when flesh and heart fail, that the love of Christ is amazingly manifested to believers.

It is when the swellings of Jordan come almost over the poor believer’s soul; when he is ready to sink beneath the boisterous waves, that Christ reveals to him his wonderful love, which fills his heart with joy; which enables him to shout forth joyfully upon his bed, and be more than a conqueror through Him that loved us.

“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.”|| “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” And at that solemn period, when the last

* Acts vii. 56. † Psalm xxxi. 5. ‡ Psalm xvii. 15.
§ Luke ii. 29 30. || Psalm cxlix. 5.

sands of life are running out, when life's last hour is closing, he visits them individually, and unfolds the riches of his grace, and the wonders of his love.

He whispers in their ears his gracious promises. "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."*

And they find him faithful to his promises; yes, when they tread the verge of Jordan, they find him like the high priest of old, who bore the ark of the covenant, standing in the midst of the waters, that they may safely pass through its proud waves to the heavenly Canaan, that glorious land of promise—the happy home of the believers, the heaven of eternal rest. "Then are they glad, because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."† Jesus Christ, our blessed high priest, himself has passed through the Jordan of death. He has dipped his feet into this stream. He has rolled back its swelling waves. He has made a safe and easy passage for all his followers. Christian,

* Is. xlvi. 1. 2.

† Psalm cvii. 30.

why then are you afraid to die, to plunge into this stream, when you see the very footprints of your Saviour in the bottom ?

"Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died."* His eyes have been closed in death. O, believer ! Christ has been laid in the cold and silent grave before you. He has felt the chill of death. But he has removed its sting. Through death, he has destroyed him that had the power of it. Fear not, death is a vanquished foe. Christ says concerning his people, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death : O death ! I will be thy plague ; O grave ! I will be thy destruction."† Christian, death cannot hurt you. It is but a sure step into glory. Are you in bondage through the fear of death ? Christ has delivered you from this bondage. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same ; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."‡ Thus, the children of God are safely conducted through death to mansions of glory, and awake amid the splendors of an im-

* Rom. viii. 34.

† Hosea xiii. 14

‡ Heb. ii. 14, 15

mortal day. How happy they, who, when walking through the valley of the shadow of death, find that Jesus is their friend and companion!

How glorious he! how happy they,
In such a glorious friend!
Whose love secures them all the way,
And crowns them at the end.

Thus, while the believer is standing on the verge of the grave, and looking back on his past life, his past conflicts, his earthly pilgrimage, he can exclaim in the language of the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" and as he looks forward into a vast eternity, and sees the rich rewards that are shortly to be his, the kingdom that he is going to possess, the crown of glory that is soon to be placed upon his brow, he triumphantly adds, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." At least, he hears that happy approbation, and joyful invitation, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."*

The solemn scene closes. The dark valley

* Matth. xxv. 23.

is passed. Jordan is crossed. No more strug-gles. No more pain. No more tears of sorrow, and affliction. No more death. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."* The believer is "absent from the body, and present with the Lord." In the Saviour's perfect love, he rests, and finds his eternity of joy. In his dying moments he could say, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me." "For this God is our God, for ever and ever; he will be our guide, even unto death." And he has experienced a happy realization of these promises. That Saviour who loved him in life, also manifests his love to him in the hour of death. His love is abiding, it is not subject to mutation; it knows no change. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."†

As the believer's mortal career is about to terminate, the Saviour stands by him, and encircles him with the arms of his love. He sheds abroad his love in the believer's heart. He sustains him amid the agonies of dissolving nature. He strengthens him by his grace. The dying Christian cries, "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my

* Is. xxv. 8.

† John xiii. 1.

portion for ever."* "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."†

Thus he finishes his earthly course with joy. His end is peace. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."‡ With him all is calm, and peaceful. The heavens are serene. The thunders of the law are hushed. Calvary is in his eye. Around him all is sprinkled with atoning blood. No wonder, then, that he should die in peace; for, "being justified by faith," he has "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." He has obtained the victory over death, the last enemy. Hence, many a dying Christian has been able to say, with Dr. Goodwin, "Is this dying? Is this the enemy that dismayed me so long, now appearing so harmless, and even pleasant?"

Not so with the end of the wicked. To him, death is terrible; the grave, gloomy; and eternity, dark. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death."§ The death-bed of the Christian is a glorious, happy place.

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walk of virtuous life,
Quite on the verge of heaven." |

* Ps. lxxiii. 26.

† 2 Cor. iv. 16.

‡ Ps. xxxvii. 37.

§ Prov. xiv. 32.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN THE HOUR OF DEATH (CONTINUED); THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

"Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."—Heb. xii. 1.

A GREAT many delightful records of the deathbed scenes of martyrs, ministers of Jesus Christ, and private Christians, who have enjoyed the presence of Christ in a dying hour, who have felt his love manifested to them, and have received his consolations, might be adduced to corroborate the assertions we have already made, and to confirm the truth, that Christ does thus manifest his love to dying believers. We shall introduce the following:

1. Lambert, a martyr under Henry VIII., while he was cruelly mangled by the soldiers' halberts, and consuming in a slow fire, raised his burning hands amid the flames, and, with a distinct voice, exclaimed, "None but Christ; none but Christ!"

2. Lawrence Saunders, suffered martyrdom under the "bloody Queen Mary." He kissed the stake at which he was bound, and cried

aloud, "Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome life everlasting!"

3. John Knox, the Scottish Reformer's dying words, were, "Come, Lord Jesus, sweet Jesus! into thy hands I commend my spirit." Again he said, "I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I shall be! Now, for the last time, I commit soul, body, and spirit into his hands." Uttering a deep sigh, he said, "Now it is come!" His attendant desired him to give his friends a sign that he died in peace. On this he waved his hand, and uttering two deep sighs, he fell asleep in Jesus.

4. John Welch, the son-in-law of John Knox, was one of the most eminent ministers that the Church of Scotland ever produced. He died in great joy. On his death-bed, he seemed to feel himself on the very threshold of glory: he was filled and overpowered with the sensible manifestations of God's love and glory. His last words were uttered in an ecstasy of joy: "It is enough, O Lord, it is now enough: hold thy hand; thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more!"

5. Samuel Rutherford, professor of divinity in the University of St. Andrew's, was one of the most resplendent lights that ever rose in Scotland. He died a triumphant death. In his

last moments, he was favored with a most wonderful manifestation of Christ's love. He felt that Christ was with him, and that he manifested his grace to him; and he was, through that manifested love and grace, enabled to exclaim with his dying breath, "There is none like Christ. I feel, I feel, I believe, I joy, I rejoice, I feed on manna! My eyes shall see my Redeemer, and I shall be ever with him? And what would you more? I have been a sinful man; but I stand at the best pass that ever a man did. Christ is mine, and I am his! Glory, glory, to my Creator and Redeemer forever! Glory shines in Immanuel's land! O for arms to embrace him! O for a well-tuned harp." He continued exulting in God his Saviour to the last, as one in full vision of joy and glory. At length he entered into the joy of his Lord.

"In vain my fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories that surround the saints,
When yielding up their breath.

"One gentle sigh their fetters breaks;
We scarce can say 'They're gone,'
Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne."

6. Rev. James Durham, on his dying bed, was at first in much darkness of his mind. He

said to a friend, "For all that I have preached and written, there is but one scripture that I can think of, or dare to lay hold of. Tell me, brother, if I may dare lay the weight of my salvation on it: "Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out!" "That you may depend on," said the minister in reply, "though you had a thousand salutations at hazard!" Having remained some time in silence, he at length came joyfully from beneath the dark cloud, and cried, in a rapture of joy, "Is not the Lord good? Is he not infinitely good? See how he smiles! I do say it, and I do proclaim it!"

7. The noble Marquis of Argyle, on the morning of his execution, while settling his worldly business, was so overpowered by the manifestation of divine love and goodness, that he broke out in a holy rapture, and said, "I thought to have concealed the Lord's goodness; but it will not do. I am now ordering my affairs; and God is sealing my charter to my heavenly inheritance, and is just now saying to me, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee!"

8. James Guthrie, a godly minister, the companion of the noble Argyle, exclaimed, when on the scaffold, "Jesus is my light and life, my righteousness my strength and salvation, and all

my desire! Him, O Him do I commend with all my soul unto you. Bless Him, O my soul, now and forever! Now, O Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

9. The pious Hervey closed his life in peace. His last words were: "How thankful am I for death! It is the passage to the Lord and Giver of eternal life. O welcome, welcome death! Thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of a Christian: to live is Christ; to die, is gain! Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!" Then he fell asleep in Jesus. Oh, what a happy death; to die unto the Lord—to sleep in Jesus!

10. William Romaine was an eminent preacher of the gospel of Jesus, and died a joyful death. He had the love of Christ in his heart; and He was very precious to him in the hour of death. "I have," said he; "the peace of God in my conscience, and the love of God in my heart. Jesus is more precious than rubies; and all that can be desired on earth, is not to be compared to him." Being near his dissolution, he cried out, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty! Glory be to thee on High, for such peace on earth, and good will to men." One time he said,

"I have much of the presence of Jesus with me."

11. Rev. Dr. Doddridge, an eminent servant of Christ, said, on his death-bed, "I am full of confidence: there is a hope set before me; I have fled; I still fly for refuge to that hope. In him I trust. In him I have strong consolation, and shall assuredly be accepted in the beloved of my soul."

12. The immortal Baxter closed his course full of joy and peace. To some ministers around him, he said, "I have peace, I have peace!" "You are now drawing near your long-desired home," said one. "I believe, I believe," was the reply. When the question was put to him, "How are you?" he promptly answered, "Almost well!" To a friend who entered the chamber, he said, "I thank you, I thank you for coming." Then fixing his eye on him, he added, "The Lord teach you how to die!" These were his last words.

13. John Janeway, a young minister of England, died one of the most triumphant Christian deaths on record. Not a word dropped from his lips, which did not breathe of Christ and heaven. His Saviour was with him in the dark vale; the arms of Christ supported him; the love and smiles of Christ cheered his departing soul, and made death itself sweet to him.

He broke out in such words as these: "O, he is come! he is come! O, how glorious is the blessed Jesus! How shall I speak the thousandth part of his praises! O for words to set out a little of that excellency; but it is inexpressible! O, my friends, come look upon a dying man, and wonder! I myself cannot but wonder! Was there ever greater kindness? Were there ever such manifestations of rich grace? O, why me, Lord; why me? If this be dying, dying is sweet! Let no Christian be afraid of dying. O, death is sweet to me! This bed is soft! Christ's arms, his smiles, his visits; sure they would turn hell into heaven! What are all human pleasures compared to one glimpse of his glory, which shines so strongly on my soul? I shall soon be in eternity: I shall soon see Christ himself, who died for me, who loved me, and washed me in his blood! I shall soon mingle in the hallelujahs of glory! Methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry me to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be forever with the Lord! And who can choose but rejoice in all this?"

Often he would say, "O, that I could but let you know what I now feel! O, that I could express the thousandth part of that sweetness that I now find in Christ! You would all then

think it well worth while to make it your business to be religious. O, my dear friends, we little think what Christ is worth upon a death-bed! I would not for a world, nay, for millions of worlds, be now without Christ and pardon."

To those around him, he said, "O that glory, the unspeakable glory that I behold! My heart is full; my heart is full! Christ smiles, and I cannot but smile. The arms of my blessed Saviour are open to embrace me; the angels stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom. O, did you see what I see, you would all cry out with me, 'How long, dear Lord? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' O, why are his chariot wheels so long in coming? I do so long to be with Christ, that I could be contented to be cut in pieces, and to be put to the most exquisite torments, so that I might but die and be with Christ. O, how sweet is Jesus! 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' Death, do thy worst. Death has lost its terribleness. Death! it is nothing to me! Death is nothing (through grace) to me. I can as easily die, as shut my eyes, or turn my head and sleep. I long to be with Christ: I long to die."

To his Christian friends who came to see him, he said, "O help me to praise God, I have nothing else to do, from this time to eternity, but to praise and love God! O, praise, praise,

praise, that infinite boundless love that hath so
a wonder, looked upon my soul, and done more
for me than for thousands of his children !
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within
me, bless his holy name ! Help me, help me, O
my friends, to praise and admire him that hath
done such astonishing wonders for my soul :
he hath pardoned all my sins ; he hath filled
me with his goodness ; he hath given me grace
and glory, and no good thing hath he withheld
from me."

On another occasion, he uttered such words
as these, "Admire God forever and ever, O ye
redeemed ones ! O, those joys, the taste of which
I have ! The everlasting joys which are at his
right hand forever more ! Eternity, eternity
itself is too short to praise God in. O bless the
Lord with me ! Come, let us shout for joy,
and boast in the God of our salvation. O, help
me to praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth
forever." Again he said, "I shall presently
behold Christ himself that died for me, and
loved me, and washed me in his own blood. I
shall, before a few hours are over, be in eternity,
singing the song of Moses, and the song of the
Lamb. I shall presently stand upon Mount
Zion, with an innumerable company of angels,
and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus
the mediator of the new covenant. I shall hear

the voice of much people, and be one amongst them, who shall say, hallelujah, salvation, glory, honor and power, unto the Lord our God! And yet a little while, and I shall sing unto the Lamb a song of praise, saying, Worthy art thou to receive praise, who wert slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign with thee forever and ever."

A few hours before his death, he said, "And now, dear Lord, my work is done. I have finished my course, I have fought the good fight; and henceforth there remaineth for me a crown of righteousness. Now come, dear Lord Jesus, come quickly." At length his course was completed, and this lovely servant of the Lord fell asleep in Jesus.

14. The great Thomas Halyburton, one of the most learned divines of Scotland, and professor of divinity in the University of St. Andrew's, breathed out his soul to God in a triumphant death. The following were his last words: "I dare look death in the face, in its most ghastly shape, and hope soon to have the victory over it. Glory, glory to him! O, what of God do I see! I have never seen any thing like it. The beginning and the end of religion are wonder-

fully sweet! I long for his salvation: I bless his name, I have found him! I am taken up in blessing him; I am dying rejoicing in the Lord! O, I could not have believed that I should bear, and bear cheerfully, as I have done, this rod which hath lain long on me. This is a miracle! Pain without pain! You see a man dying; a monument of the glorious power of astonishing grace!" Some time after, he said, "When I shall be so weak as no longer to be able to speak, I will, if I can, give you a sign of triumph when I am near to glory." He did so: for when one said, "I hope you are encouraging yourself in the Lord," being now unable to speak, he lifted up his hands and clapped them, and in a few moments expired.

15. Mr. Augustus M. Toplady closed a long and eminently holy life, by a very triumphant death. He said, "O how this soul of mine longs to be gone: like an imprisoned bird, it longs to take its flight. O, that I had the wings of a dove, I should flee away to the realms of bliss, and be at rest forever! I long to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." At another time he said, "O what a day of sunshine has this been to me! I have no words to express it; it is unutterable! O, my friends, how good our God is! Almost without interruption his presence has been with me." Being

near his end, he said, "O what delights! Who can fathom the joys of the third heavens!" And just before he expired, he said, "The sky is clear; there is no cloud; come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

16. Rev. Thomas Scott, the commentator, died a happy, triumphant death. The love of Christ filled his soul; and his dying bed may be said to have been sublimely Christian! Among the last words he uttered were these, "Lord support me! Lord Jesus receive my spirit! Christ is my all! He is my only hope! O to realize the fullness of joy! O, to have done with temptation! This is heaven begun! I have done with darkness forever! Satan is vanquished! Nothing remains but salvation with eternal glory, eternal glory!"

17. Dr. Condict, President of Queen's (now Rutger's) College, New Jersey, was known to be much afraid of death, but he died triumphantly. Raising himself from his pillow, he stretched out his quivering hands, and exclaimed, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me." Then he added, "Let us pray;" and having uttered a brief and solemn prayer, he gently leaned back on his pillow, and

closing his eyes with his own hands, soon fell asleep in Jesus.

18. Dr. Dwight, President of Yale College, closed his useful life by a peaceful and happy death. He requested his brother to read to him the 17th chapter of John. While listening to the latter verses of that chapter, he exclaimed, "O, what triumphant truths!" Some one recited to him a part of the 23d Psalm, and asked him, "Can you now say, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me?" He replied, "I hope so." He died in peace, cheered by his Saviour's presence and love.

19. Dr. Edward Payson was an eminent Christian, and a devoted minister of the Lord. He died a most triumphant death. When about to finish his course, he thus commenced a letter: "Dear sister, were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view: its glories beam upon me; its breezes fan me; its odours are wafted to me; its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill that may be crossed at a single step, whenever

God shall give permission. The Sun of righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached; and now fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart, and a single tongue, seem altogether inadequate to my wants: I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion."

Among the last words of this excellent and pious divine, are the following: "A young man, when about to leave the world, exclaimed, 'The battle's fought, the battle's fought; but the victory is lost forever!' But I can say, The battle's fought, the battle's fought, and the victory is won! The victory is won forever! I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity, and benevolence, and happiness, to all eternity!"

Again: "Hitherto I have viewed God as a fixed star; bright indeed, but often intercepted by clouds. But now he is coming nearer and nearer; and he spreads into a sun so vast, and so glorious, that the sight is too dazzling for flesh and blood to sustain!"

On one occasion, when laboring under very acute pains, he exclaimed, "These are God's arrows; but they are sharpened with love." Once he exclaimed, "Victory, victory! Peace, peace!"

The last words he was heard to whisper, were these: "Faith and patience, hold out!" Thus died Dr. Payson; and he has left a glorious testimony to the truth of the religion of Jesus.

20. Harlan Page* was an eminent Christian, and used great personal efforts for the souls of individuals; and in his death, Christ was with him. "A death-bed," said he, "is a precious place, when we have the presence of Christ—then to wake to a glorious immortality." Again: "I feel as if I had got half way home. I cannot bear to stop. It would be a pity to have the flesh return on these limbs again."

Again he said: "I commit myself to thee, Jesus, Saviour of sinners. O the infinite love of Christ! I may stop my mouth, and lie in the dust." He appeared to feel that he had obtained a new view of the love of Christ; therefore he said, "It seems as if I never knew before what it was to love him. O, who can help loving such a blessed Saviour!"

* See a very interesting memoir of this holy man, by W. A. Hallock, published by the American Tract Society.

Again he repeated these words: "O when shall I go home? How long must I be burdened with this body! The Lord knows how much suffering I need, to prepare me for his kingdom."

A little before his death, he exclaimed, "Home! home!" and prayed: "O for a free and full discharge! Lord Jesus, come quickly! Why wait thy chariot wheels so long? I dedicate myself to thee. O may I have the victory! O come quickly! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

21. David Brainerd died a happy death. With perfect composure of mind, this eminent servant of God saw the approaches of dissolution. To him, death was not an enemy, but a friend: it was the long expected messenger, sent to convey him home to his heavenly Father's house; and he would exclaim, "Oh! why is the chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot? Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!" In this happy frame of mind, he expired.

22. Rev. Risdon Darracott, an eminent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, said on his death-bed, "I am going to that Jesus whom I love, and whom I have so often preached. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Why are thy chariot wheels so long a coming?" The night

before he died, he said, "O what a good God have I in Christ Jesus! I would praise him, but my lips cannot. Eternity will be too short to speak his praises." He related his experience of the goodness of God to him during his sickness, and said, "If I had a thousand lives to live, I would live them all for Christ. I have cast anchor on him, and rely on his blood, and am going to venture my all upon him. There is nothing on earth I desire! Here I am waiting! What a mercy to be in Jesus!" He then threw abroad his arms, and exclaimed, "He is coming! he is coming! But surely this can't be death! O how astonishingly is the Lord softening my passage! Surely God is too good to such a worm! O speed thy chariot wheels! Why are they so long in coming? I long to be gone." At length he fell asleep in Jesus, whom he so much loved, and who manifested such tender love to him in the hour of death.

23. Mrs. Catharine Brettergh, a singular Christian of Lancashire, (England,) was blessed to die a comfortable and joyful death. The following were some of her last words: "O the joys that I feel in my soul! O my sweet Saviour, shall I be one with thee, as thou art one with the Father? O wonderful is thy love to me, who am but dust! To make such as me partaker of thy glory! O that my tongue and

heart were able to sound forth thy praises as I ought!"

24. The amiable and pious Hannah Housman, when on her death-bed, often said, with smiles in her face, and transports of joy: "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly! Why tarry the wheels of thy chariot? O, blessed convoy! come and fetch my soul, to dwell with God, and Christ, and perfect spirits, forever and ever. When I join that blessed society above, my pleasures will never end. O, the glory, the glory that shall be set on the head of faith and love!"

25. Jeremiah Evarts, so well known by every friend of missionaries, died a triumphant death. Feeling the love of Christ in his last moments, he broke out into rapturous expressions: "Praise him, praise him, praise him in a way which you know not of." Some one said to him, "You will soon see Jesus as he is, and know how to praise him." He replied, "O wonderful, wonderful, wonderful glory! We cannot comprehend . . . wonderful glory! I will praise him: I will praise him! Wonderful . . . glory . . . Jesus reigneth!"

26. Richard Cecil often exclaimed on his death-bed, with the martyr Lambert, "None but Christ; none but Christ!" As he drew nearer to death, Jesus Christ was his only topic; and a short time before he died, he requested one of

his family to write down for him in a book the following sentence: “‘None but Christ, none but Christ,’ said Lambert, dying at the stake: the same, in dying circumstances, with his whole heart, saith Richard Cecil.”

27. The Rev. John Rees, of London, uttered the following words on his death-bed: “Christ in his person, Christ in the love of his heart, and Christ in the power of his arm, is the rock on which I rest; and now,” (reclining his head on the pillow,) “Death, strike!”

28. Mrs. Hannah Woodd, mother of the Rev. Basil Woodd, repeated the following words, when near her dissolution: “Oh! I am very happy! I am going to my mansion in the skies. Thank God, I have a hope built on the Rock of ages. I am dying, but I am going to glory. I shall see Him as he is. I shall be forever near him, and behold his face. Blessed be God! Blessed be God!”

29. Mrs. M. M. Athans, an excellent Christian lady, left this testimony to the cause of Christianity: “I bless God, I have not one fear concerning dying. That Almighty Lord, who has so wonderfully preserved me to the present moment, will not forsake me in my last extremity. No: when flesh and heart fail, he will be the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.”

30. We shall close our records of triumphant deaths, with an account of the last hours of a remarkably pious young lady, who lately went to glory; and whose death-bed scene, it was the privilege of the author to witness.

He had often read accounts of the triumphant deaths of believers, but never before had he seen such an illustrious exhibition of divine grace, and love, manifested to a saint, in the hour of death.

Not till then, did he feel that there was such power in the religion of Jesus, to sustain, and to cheer in the hour of dissolution. This young lady had been confined to a bed of severe suffering for one year. At last her soul was ripened for glory. The time came that she must die and her death-bed was a scene of triumph. Christ was very precious to her; and his love was wonderfully manifested to her soul. She often exclaimed, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."*

The following are among her last words. To her distant brother she thus dictated a letter "Dear brother, I know not whether I shall meet you again on earth; but I hope to meet you in heaven, where we shall be forever singing the praises of God; where the Lamb, which

* Cant. ii. 16.

is in the midst of the throne, shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of waters, and where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes."

To her father, who said to her, "I fear I must lose you;" she replied, "Your loss will be my gain! I have a building of God, a house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And again when he said, I think you will fall asleep in Jesus;" she responded, "It will be a happy change."

As her friends were standing around her dying bed, she said to a brother, "Have you any words to say?" He immediately repeated Psalm xxiii. 4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." These words vere very reviving to her. She seemed to feel that Christ was with her in that trying moment, that his love was shcd abroad in her heart; for, turning herself, she exclaimed in a transport of joy, "Oh! I would not give up Christ for all the world!"

"Whom have I in the heavens high,
But thee, O Lord, alone?
And in the earth whom I desire,
Beside thee there is none."

"I hope that I shall meet you all in heaven,

where we shall be forever with the Lord." She wished that Christ might be praised; and that he might be magnified by her dying breath. To her brother she said, "I hope you may live with Christ, and praise him throughout the endless ages of eternity."

She was asked by one, if, during her sickness she had not often experienced something like heaven upon earth. She replied that she had. Her earthly course being nearly finished, she opened her eyes, which were soon to be closed in death, and in the language of strong, unshaken faith, exclaimed with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me."* Once she broke out into a rapture and exclaimed, "O, to be ever with the Lord, what a happy change!"

A little while before her death, one said to her, "It is a happy thing when the believer can say, when about to leave the world, 'I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' She said yes; and added, (though with great dif-

* Job xix. 25-27

ficulty, her breath being almost gone,) "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Her faith remained firm unto the end, and her hope and confidence unshaken to the last. Her sky was clear and serene, her mind calm and composed, and thus she fell asleep in Jesus, and entered into the joy of her Lord.

As the writer gazed upon the solemn scene before him, he could not but feel the force of Revelation xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." A few days before this young lady died, she requested the following verses to be read at her funeral. They are too beautiful, and impressive to be omitted here.

"TO MY YOUNG COMPANIONS.

"My youthful mates, both small and great,
Stand here, and you shall see,
An awful sight, which is a type
Of what you soon must be.

"I used to appear once fresh and fair
Among the youthful crowd;

But now behold me dead and cold,
Wrapped in a sable shroud.

"My cheeks once red, like roses spread,
My sparkling eyes so gay;
But now you see how 'tis with me,
A lifeless lump of clay.

"When you are dressed in all your best,
In fashion so complete,
You soon must be as you see me,
Wrapped in a winding sheet.

"Ah, youth beware, and do prepare
To meet the monster, death;
For he may come when you are young,
And steal away your breath.

"When you unto your frolics go,
Remember what I say;
In a short time, though in your prime,
You may be called away.

"Now I am gone, I can't return;
No more of me you'll see;
But it is true that all of you
Must shortly follow me.

"When you unto my grave do go,
The gloomy place to see,
I say to you who stand and view,
Prepare to follow me."

And now, reader, can you not say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! How important is it then that you should now choose Christ, in order that you

may enjoy his love and presence, not only through life, but also in the hour of death! If you belong to Christ, you will find him, in the last hour of life, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

What an awful thing it is to die without salvation by Christ, without an interest in him ; and yet millions live without God, and without hope in the world ; and millions more die in the same awful condition, and plunge into a dark and miserable eternity. O, be admonished to choose Christ in time, and he will be yours in death, and in eternity.

How unspeakably blessed it is to enjoy the love and smiles of Christ in a dying hour! Then what can the world do for you? The tears of your friends, and the exertions of your physicians, will then be unavailing.

It is Christ alone that can make a dying-bed easy and comfortable. His love and presence will sustain you, and his almighty arms support you.

“Though unseen by human eye,
The Redeemer’s hand is nigh :
He has poured salvation’s light
Far within the vale of night;
There will God my steps control,
There his presence bless my soul.
Lord whate’er my sorrows be,
Teach me to look up to thee.”

"He who is thus with you," says an excellent writer, "will afford all needful comfort and support in the trying hour. He will open at that time treasures of grace and strength, to which you had been previously a stranger. The Redeemer himself is present, not only to guide his saints, but to infuse that comfort and vigor which will abundantly compensate for the sinkings of expiring nature. Who but those who have entered heaven, can tell what unearthly joys are vouchsafed the saint in a dying hour? Often, there is reason to believe, they transcend every thing possessed in the present life. There may be visions of glory realized by the spirit, which are second only to those of heaven. The dying experience of many saints has been of the most delightful kind. Whether such hopes and joys as were afforded to Janeway and others, will be vouchsafed to you, you know not; nor is it necessary you should know. Whatever is needful for you in a dying hour, Christ will bestow. He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee."* Remember, that he has said, "Fear not, I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."†

When we contemplate those, whose deaths we

* 2 Cor. xii. 9.

† Rev. i. 17, 18.

have recorded in this volume, we may justly say, "These all died in faith :" and, let us also be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."* "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."†

If you belong to Christ, he will love you in life, in death, and in that happy home, which his love has prepared for you.

In conclusion, Christian reader, you will soon exchange the abodes of mortality for the regions of bliss. Then look beyond the grave. Do not confine your thoughts to this gloomy place. Contemplate the sublime raptures of your future existence beyond the precincts of time. Christ shall one day break the slumbers of the grave, and you will arise to immortality.

The love of Christ does not stop at death. It extends beyond this solemn period. It will accompany you into the heavenly world; your everlasting happy home: and you will soon arrive there. From the valley of the shadow of death you shall ascend to the summit of Zion.

* Heb. vi. 12.

† Heb. xii. 1, 2.

You shall "Come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."* For the darkness of mortality, you shall obtain the bright glories of heaven. "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."† You will possess the promised land, the heavenly Canaan. Then shall the days of your mourning be ended. Raised in the likeness of your blessed Redeemer, you shall, finally, be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Entering the fair mansions of glory, you shall reign with your glorified Redeemer, forever and ever. O! happy issue to the Christian's short pilgrimage on earth!

With such cheering prospects to be realized, can you not also say, in the prospect of death, with many dying saints, "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

* Heb. xii. 22-24.

† Is. xxxiii. 17.

In the following chapters we shall contemplate that happy home which Christ, in his great love for a lost world, has now gone to prepare for his children. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."*

"How happy is the dying saint,
Whose sins are all forgiven;
With joy he passes Jordan's flood,
Upheld by hopes of heaven.

"The Saviour, whom he truly lov'd,
Now cheers him by his grace;
A glory gilds his dying bed,
And beams upon his face.

"Ecstatic joy and heavenly bliss
Swell his enraptured heart;
He views the promis'd land of rest,
And pants for his depart.

"Terror and dread are both unknown;
Sweet peace and hope appear,
To guide the blessed traveller home,
And all his footsteps cheer.

"Angels of light attendant wait
His spirit to convey
Beyond this drear abode of night,
To realms of endless day.

* 2 Cor. v. 1.

"Oh! may I live the life of faith,
Abound in holy love,
Till death shall bear my joyful soul
To Zion's courts above."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HAPPY HOME IN VIEW.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you."—JOHN xiv. 2.

"As when the weary trav'ller gains
The height of some o'er-looking hill,
His heart revives, if cross the plains
He eyes his home, though distant still.

"While he surveys the much loved spot,
He slightst the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey's end is seen.

"Thus when the Christian pilgrim views
By faith, his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renewes,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.

"The thought of home his spirit cheers,
No more he grieves for troubles past;
Nor any future trial fears,
So he may safe arrive at last.

"Tis there he says I am to dwell
With Jesus, in the realms of day;
Then I shall bid my cares farewell,
And he will wipe my tears away.

"Jesus, on thee our hope depends,
To lead us on to thine abode;
Assur'd our home will make amends
For all our toil while on the road."—NEWTON.

Christ has not only manifested his love to a lost world in his incarnation, sufferings, and death, but also in going to prepare a place, a happy home, for those whose salvation he has accomplished. Said the blessed Redeemer, to his sorrowful disciples, when he was about to leave the world, "I go to prepare a place for you."*

Christ has manifested most amazing love to believers, in preparing for their eternal abode, mansions of glory, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heaven is a prepared place for believers; prepared by Christ in his infinite love. The love of Christ will make heaven a glorious, happy abode indeed. Oh! what a happy home will heaven be. Thither all the redeemed shall finally assemble, to spend one eternal day in the glorious presence of Immanuel. Who can fully describe the joys of the Christian's happy home? Feeble mortals could not comprehend the description if it should be given.

* John xiv. 2.

What human mind can conceive of the unspeakable blessedness which awaits the child of God in that upper and better world, his happy home! Dear believer, to know what heaven really is, you must put off mortality. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."*

Is not your happy home always in view? Do you not long for the approach of that joyful day, which will introduce you into the mansions of glory—bring you to your endless, happy home? How short is the space that lies between you and glory! The time, how short! Already is the night far spent. The day is at hand; that blessed day which will bring each weary Christian traveller home, and seat him in his Father's house; that house not made with hands, in which there are many mansions.

The map of heaven is laid wide open for your inspection. Often obtain a glimpse of the happy land. Be always looking heavenward and homeward. Let heaven be always in your eye, and the earth under your feet, and in a little while God shall wipe away all tears: you will reach your journey's end; then faith shall be turned into vision, hope, into fruition, and you will

* 1 Cor. ii 9.

be fully satisfied with the goodness of God's house.

As you now survey the glories of your happy home, does not your heart exult at the prospect? And is not the thought of home at all times refreshing? What name is more endearing than home, sweet home; around which so many hallowed associations cluster?

Christian, heaven is your only true home. Here you have no continuing city nor place of abode. The divine command is, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."* "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."† God has provided a better home for you, than this polluted world. O, remember that you are a stranger and pilgrim on earth. Let your course be onward in the Christian's journey. Quicken your pace on the road to glory. Your happy home will not be always in view: it will soon be in possession.

Reader, are you pressing forward to the Christian's happy home? Is heaven the home which you expect to reach? Do you long to arrive at those everlasting mansions in the skies? Then let the hope of eternal glory elevate your affections above all sublunary objects. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things

* Micah ii. 10.

† Heb. iii. 9.

which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”*

The ultimate object of Christ’s mediatorial work is to bring sinners to glory—to God’s house—to the happy home: there they are to live; there to reign forever; there to be ever with the Lord. God will bring all his dear children home to glory. Then he will receive them, and be a father unto them, and they will be his sons and daughters. They will be forever with their kind heavenly Father—with their blessed elder Brother—with prophets and apostles—with saints and angels—with one another. What a happy meeting! What blessed society will the saints enjoy! Then they will have gained the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They will receive those crowns of glory which fade not away. They shall be kings and priests unto God. They shall serve him day and night in his temple above. Blest abode! Delightful employment, that of praising God! Happy they! who are

* Col. iii. 1-4.

to spend eternity in such a home; contrasted with the glories of which, this earth is darkness itself

Christian, soon shall the interposing vail of mortality be drawn aside, and you will behold the glories of that land which no mortal pen can now describe. But is heaven soon to be your happy home? Are you there to reign with Jesus, in the realms of everlasting day; there to behold the uncreated glory of Immanuel? Then how trifling should the transient concerns of earth appear to you! You should smile at the frowns of time. The angry tempest will soon be over. The swelling waves of life's ocean will soon rise no more. You will soon have reached the desired haven of eternal rest, the blessed shores of immortality, the happy home; and that home will more than compensate for all the toil by the way.

"Soon will you reach the blest abode,
Where happy pilgrims ever reign;
Soon shall you see the face of God,
And all the bliss of heaven obtain:"

Live with your happy home always in view. Let the glories of a coming eternity revive your drooping spirits, amidst life's trials and life's conflicts. The road to glory is but a short one. A moment of time intervenes, and then eternal

ages commence to roll away. After this moment has passed, you will enter upon a state of endless felicity. Arrived at your happy home, you will take up an everlasting song of praise; you will celebrate the victories of redeeming love, through one unending day. You have overcome, through the blood of the Lamb. You have been more than a conqueror, through him that loved you. And now you shall stand a monument of God's love, and mercy, and grace; you shall be made a pillar in his glorious temple above, whence there shall be no more going out. You shall live with Christ, and praise him throughout the endless ages of eternity. You shall behold Immanuel in his unveiled glory. You shall praise him for that unbounded love, which has obtained for you immortal bliss. O, Christian! the love of Christ has procured that unfading wreath of glory, which will one day be entwined around your brow; that radiant diadem which you will forever wear. The love of Christ has prepared a happy home for your reception, when this sublunary scene shall have vanished from your mortal vision.

All the happiness you enjoy in time; and all the glory that will crown you through eternity, flow from the love of Christ. Make him your boast in time, your all in all; and may he be formed in you, the hope of glory.

Happy they! who have fled for refuge to the world's Redeemer. He will carry them to glory. Reader, may this precious Saviour be yours, in life, in death, and in eternity. Conducted by the Captain of your salvation, you will also reach the Christian's happy home, and realize the joys of a blessed immortality.

What glorious prospects are presented to the eye of faith, the spiritual vision of the Christian! He views the never-ending glories of the heavenly kingdom; and in that view he loses the sight of terrestrial grandeur. He quickly glides over the narrow stream of time; till he finds himself sailing on the vast unbounded ocean of eternity, an eternity of blessedness. He lifts his eyes to the hills, from whence cometh his help; those everlasting hills which tower aloft, beyond the swellings of Jordan; beyond the valley of the shadow of death. He expects soon to reach the heights of Zion. "They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."*

In the mean time, O my soul, meditate upon the glories of thy happy home. What must be the feelings of the Christian, when he views all heaven as his own; when he can claim all the delights of the celestial paradise as his, and looks

* Psalm lxxxiv. 7.

upon the world to come as his eternal happy home!

Come, Christian, survey the happy land, your everlasting home. Life is fast hastening away. The oscillating tides of time are bearing you onward and homeward. Every wave of life's tempestuous ocean is only wafting you to the happy shores of a blessed eternity. Then look beyond this poor dying world! Look at that eternal home which Christ has prepared for you! View the celestial city, irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb! See the pearly gates, the golden streets, the shining inhabitants of the New Jerusalem! The uncreated glory of God will enlighten that city of everlasting habitation, which the love of Christ has prepared.

What a blessed habitation has Christ prepared for believers! What a glorious inheritance has he promised them! Come, my soul, and survey it.

“My soul, on Pisgah’s mount ascend,
Where Moses once admiring stood;
There view the promised land extend
Beyond the swelling Jordan’s flood

“By faith survey the landscape o’er
Where living waters gently flow;
Till earth usurp thy love no more;
Till all thy kindling passions glow.

"In that blessed region of delight,
The saints nor sin nor sorrow feel,
Eternal day excludes the night,
And all possess the spirit's seal.

"The ransomed soul in glory clad,
Shines brighter than meridian sun;
The weary pilgrim, now so sad,
There finds his toilsome journey done."

O my soul, rise and soar aloft to the heavenly Canaan! Mount up as upon eagles' wings, and behold the king in his beauty, and the land that is afar off. Leave the world to those who seek their pleasures and happiness in its perish-ing enjoyments, and set thy affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

How the world recedes from your view, as you obtain a glimpse of the heavenly land! The short-lived pleasures of earth, and the transient show of sublunary magnificence, no longer fascinate the mind, as it gains a Pisgah view of the Christian's endless happy home, the glories of which baffle all description. The love of Christ is most illustriously manifested to believers, in his going to prepare such a home for them. O matchless love! that Jesus has not only died for sinners, but has gone to prepare mansions above, where they shall reign with

him in eternal glory ! Hasten on, O joyful day, when the redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs ; when ransomed sinners shall commence to celebrate the wonders of redeeming love in mansions of glory !

Look forward, Christian reader, to the consummation of your bliss. With joy anticipate the glories of the resurrection morning ; a morning that will dawn upon the glorified saint, without a single cloud to darken his beatific vision, or obscure the glorious rays of the Sun of righteousness, that will arise with healing in his beams, and forever gladden the hearts of millions of happy saints. What a happy day will that be, when all the children of God shall reach their everlasting home ; those mansions in the skies, where all are perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God through eternity !

Dear believer, in humble confidence in God, wait with patience till the coming of the Lord Jesus ; till you are brought into the full possession of the heavenly inheritance. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away ; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith

unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

Blessed Jesus! keep me by thy almighty power through faith unto salvation. Spiritualize my affections—elevate my views to the world of glory. Wean my heart from the fleeting enjoyments of this mortal life, this perishing earth. Satisfy me with thy goodness and mercy; visit me with thy salvation, and at last bring me home to thyself in glory.

“Then let my soul forever raise
The incense of adoring praise;
And join the heavenly choirs above,
In sweetest songs of grateful love.”

Reader! look beyond this sublunary scene of changing mortality.

“All, all on earth is shadow; all beyond
Is substance. * * * * *
How solid all, where change shall be no more!”

Soar aloft on the wings of faith, and roam in imagination through the myriads of ages that lie beyond the precincts of time; and in those regions of immortality prepared for the just, may you realize the joys of endless life, of an immortal existence, and of an inheritance before which the splendor of a thousand worlds fades;

which will endure when this earth and all her terrestrial glory shall have passed away, and when the sun shall have cast his last rays, and the stars have set in endless night!

“Life’s theatre as yet is shut ; and death,
Strong death alone, can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove.
* * * * And spring to life,
The life of gods ; oh transport ! and of man.”

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy ; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, amen.”*

* Jude i. 24, 25.

CHAPTER X.

THE HAPPY HOME CONTEMPLATED—BEING WITH CHRIST
IN GLORY.

"Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."—JOHN xvii. 24.

"So shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 THESS. iv. 17.

In those blest regions of delight,
Where Jesus is unveil'd to sight,
No mortal tongue can e'er express
The ransom'd sinner's blessedness.

WHAT mortal pen can describe the glowing beauties of Immanuel's land ! What mortal tongue can express the blessedness of the saints, when gazing upon the heaven-bright glories of Immanuel's form, and dwelling forever in his glorious presence, under the resplendent beams of the Sun of righteousness ! This is what the eye hath not seen ; what the ear hath not heard ; what the heart of man has never conceived. But yet this blessedness awaits all the saints, and will abide with them through the incessant flow of eternity's immeasurable ages. O, happy thought !

Dear Christian reader, Christ has, in his infin-

ite love, now gone to prepare a place, an endless happy home for you; but he will come again, and receive you to himself. He will not always leave you in this vale of tears. No: when this short life is ended, you will "depart and be with Christ;" you will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Christ will bring you to his Father's house, where his glorious presence is enjoyed without a medium. He will welcome you to the mansions of glory, to the kingdom of heaven. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."†

Thus spake our Saviour before he left this world — before he ascended to heaven from Mount Olivet. But there is a day coming, when that same Saviour shall break through the clouds of heaven; "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."

Job obtained a glimpse of this day. He starts forward on the wings of faith, and beholds through the lapse of many ages the divine

* Matth. xxv. 34.

. † John xiv. 2, 3.

form of his Redeemer. He sees him with his very eyes. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me."*

Christ shall come again, to gather his children home, to that place which he has prepared for them. Then shall the word of command, issued from his blessed lips, go forth: "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."† Then shall we be ever in his presence, where there is fullness of joy and pleasure forever.

It is Christ's presence that will make the very heaven of happiness, the very centre of felicity. It is being with Christ that will constitute the purest, brightest, noblest heaven. What would

* Job xix. 25-27.

† 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

heaven be to the saints, did they not enjoy the presence of Christ? It would be no heaven to them, though they were surrounded with the glories of the New Jerusalem.

O Blessed Jesus! may we be going up through this wilderness world, leaning upon thee; walking by faith; loving and serving thee; and may we finally be brought to behold thy glorious face in the realms of light, in the paradise above, and be ever with thee.

“What is the world, but grief and care?
What heaven, if thou be absent there?
Thy glorious face illumines the sky,
And sheds ecstatic joys on high.”

It is in the presence of Christ, that we will participate in those pleasures which are at God’s right hand. “In thy presence is fullness of joy: at thy right hand, there are pleasures for evermore.”*

Oh! to be ever with the Lord! What human mind can comprehend the blessedness of such a state? Christ knows this blessedness; and how fervently he prays, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.”† This prayer will be answered. We shall soon be with Christ. We

* Psalm xvi. 11.

† John xvii. 24.

shall soon behold his glory. Then shall we see Him as he is; even Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; who died on Calvary for us; whose blessed hands, and side, and feet were pierced for us; and whose precious blood flowed so freely to wash away our sins: to Him be glory forever! Oh! blessed sight. Then shall we gaze forever upon the uncreated glory of Immanuel, shining forth in full unclouded splendor. Then shall we behold the glory of that blessed Redeemer, who left the regions of bliss, to assume mortal flesh and die for us. Then shall we see with our very eyes, Him who was crucified for us on Calvary; but, oh! we shall see Him shining with inconceivable glory. The glory of Christ will attract the eyes of all the redeemed, and he will be forever "admired in all them that believe." "The Word was made flesh;";* and the glory of God shall shine through that flesh, making that blessed body more glorious than a thousand suns.

The saints shall dwell forever in the presence of Immanuel. Thrice happy they, who are to spend eternity in beholding his radiant glory, and in encompassing his throne with everlasting songs of salvation! Then shall it be proclaimed

* John i. 14.

through the heavenly mansions, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."*

In heaven, the saints will enjoy the society of the Lord himself; which is the perfection of happiness. Says Christ, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." O! to be ever near Him; to see Him as he is; to be like him; to behold his glory; to have that glory revealed in us; to praise Him eternally in the mansions above: what a happy home will this be! "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."†

Oh, to be like the blessed Jesus; to see him in glory! What heart would desire more? Then shall we commence to tread with our elder Brother, and adorable Redeemer, the ceaseless round of eternity. Then shall the wonders of his love be incessantly unfolded before us causing new songs of praise to ascend from our enraptured souls, to Him that sitteth upon the throne. Who can express the delights the saints must feel, when they look into the face of

* Rev. xxi. 8.

† 1 John iii. 2.

Christ, and there read his tender love to them! But oh how completely engulfed in the abyss of infinite love, and lost in wonder and praise, must our souls be, when we gaze upon the scars which mark the hands and feet and side of our blessed Saviour, and there read the immensity of that love which made him die for us! "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."* In those blessed regions, where He is unveiled to the sight of mortals, Jesus will gladden our hearts with perpetual joy, and love us with an everlasting love.

It is the privilege of believers to be with Christ; to spend eternity in his presence; to gaze forever upon the Sun of Righteousness, shining in his meridian splendor. That sun will never set in the "new heavens." His beams will always irradiate the city of our God, our happy dwelling place.

Christ's presence will make "our Father's house" a glorious home, a happy abode, a blessed habitation. Where he is, there will heaven be. His glorious presence will illuminate the abode of the blessed, the realms of everlasting day. And, believer when you come

* Rev. v. 6.

to dwell in those blissful mansions, his presence his society, his love, and his celestial voice will cause your enraptured soul to rejoice ; and eternity will be spent in being with him, and in beholding his glory.

"Oh! to hear that voice speak ineffable peace and consolation to your soul ; to see Him as he is, whose glory infinitely surpasses all objects of nature and of art ; to see those dear hands, and feet, and head, whose wounds in suffering for you will be more brilliant and beautiful in your eye than the topaz of Ethiopia : yea, to have his glory revealed in you ; to be perfectly like him, and to reign with him : what a heaven will this be ! Then your unbounded desires, which the whole creation could not limit, shall be satisfied with the full fruition of immortal love. You shall be refreshed with the emanations of uncreated life and joy, and shall drink at the fountain-head of pleasure. You shall mingle with society the most pure, perfect and lovely, whose glory is only surpassed by that of Him that sitteth upon the throne. You shall dwell with kindred spirits, in everlasting harmony. Your employment shall combine all the excellencies of ease, delight, and perpetuity. You will have nothing to do but to worship and serve God, and shall have ability to worship and serve him forever."

What a happy home will heaven be, where we shall be ever with the Lord! How happy will the saints be, when they come to dwell in that heavenly home—in that glorious palace, where “He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them;”* where “the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”†

Of that celestial city, in which the saints are to make their eternal home, it is said, “the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.”‡

The saints, in heaven, shall see Christ with their bodily eyes. We shall see Him, who loved us, and gave himself for us. “Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then, face to face.”§ Yes, we shall behold His glorious face, and be fully satisfied with his immortal love.

We hope shortly to exchange the trials and afflictions of this vale of tears—this suffering, dying world, for the glories of eternity; and be ever with the Lord. Then will we have

* Rev. vii. 15.

† Rev. vii. 17

‡ Rev. xxii. 3, 4.

§ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

done with transitory life, with grief and care. Then will we drink of affliction's bitter cup no more, and death itself will have lost its power over us. Then shall we be lodged in the regions of immortality, and be ever with the Lord. And when ten thousand times ten thousand years have rolled away; when ages countless as the stars which deck the midnight sky have run their ample round, it may be said that we are, as it were, just beginning to be ever with the Lord ; that we are just beginning to behold his glory, and to look into that wonderful counsel of love, that glorious plan of salvation, which will be our theme of meditation, of wonder, and of praise through the ceaseless ages of eternity. Then shall we know the joy of being with Christ. Then, there shall be no more separation between Christ and his people : they shall then be brought near him, and abide with him forever.

"O glorious hour ! O blest abode !
I shall be near and like my God !
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasure of the soul."

It will be Christ's amazing love that will then fill our hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It will be the brighter manifestation of that love which will cause our souls to over-

flow with ecstatic joy, as we dwell in the presence of Immanuel, and surround his throne, and behold his glory. Then shall we be better “able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” Then shall we “be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Oh! the infinite love of Christ, that he should bring sinners to glory, to dwell in his presence, to spend eternity with him! “So shall we ever be with the Lord.”*

“By faith I see the hour at hand,
When in his presence I shall stand:
Then will it be my endless bliss,
To see him where and as he is.”—NEWTON.

* Thess. iv. 17.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HAPPY HOME CONTEMPLATED.—THE BLESSEDNESS
OF THE SAINTS.

"In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—PSALM xvi. 11.

COME, O my soul, retire from the noise, bustle, and tumult of a vain world, and contemplate thy happy home in the heavens! Look beyond this present fleeting scene of existence, and view thy future, eternal resting place; and may the bright glories of heaven, elevate thy views and raise thy affections above the transitory pleasures of this decaying scene.

Under the pleasing emblem of a happy home, heaven is most beautifully set forth. Christ calls it his Father's house. "In my Father's house are many mansions."^{*} If we are the children of God, we may also call it our Father's house, our happy home; and each believer may say with the Psalmist, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."[†]

* John xiv. 2.

† Psalm xxiii. 6.

Heaven is also described as a glorious city. In his sublime vision of the heavenly world, John thus speaks: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;" "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."* The streets of this city are of gold; and the gates of pearl. "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."† And John adds, "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it."‡

In this celestial city which is thus beautified by the creative power of God, and enlightened with his glory, the saints are to spend the ceaseless ages of a glorious and happy eternity. This is that city which prophets and apostles and saints of every age, have desired, and longed for; that city which Abraham, when "he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country," looked for. "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."§

* Rev. xxi 2, 11.

‡ Rev. xxi 92.

† Rev. xxi. 21.

§ Heb. xi. 10.

Heaven is that better country which all the saints of old, who confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, desired and sought to obtain. "But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."^{*} To this heavenly home, God will bring all his children, and Jesus will there dwell among them, for ever and ever.

When all the saints shall be brought home to be forever with the Lord, they will be perfectly blessed. They will enjoy the assurance of Christ's love, and the eternal smiles of his countenance! What heart can conceive the unutterable bliss of the Redeemed, when brought into the glorious palace of the great King, where there is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. They will be far from a world of grief, and sin. They will be beyond the reach of suffering. No gloom or sorrow shall ever be cloud their bright spirits in the presence of Christ. They shall be forever happy with him. Reaching the happy shores of Immanuel's land, they shall dwell with God. They shall see him. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."[†] Their souls shall be filled

* Heb xi. 16.

† Matt. v. 8.

with unutterable bliss, amid the splendors of beatific vision, and the sublime raptures of celestial joys. The ineffable glories of the Deity, shall then beam forth upon the redeemed. And, "then shall the righteous shine forth, as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father."* To the love of Christ the saints will owe all their blessedness in another world.

Let us contemplate this blessedness. In the word of God we see it described. In the 7th chapter of Revelation there is contained a glimpse of heaven—of the redeemed in glory.

There we find that when all the redeemed shall be brought home to glory, they will form a mighty host. "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands."† Millions of Adam's sons and daughters shall be brought to glory, through the merits of Immanuel.

There we find whence this mighty multitude came. To the questions, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" it is answered, "These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have

* Matt. xiii. 43.

† Rev. vii. 9.

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”*

The saints have travelled a rough road to glory, and have come out of great tribulation. Many of them have gone through the fires of persecution, and their souls have ascended to glory amid the flames of martyrdom. Many of that blessed number who now stand before God, “were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword,” were once “destitute, afflicted, tormented;”† but they have come out of all their tribulations, and are now happy before the throne of God.

The saints have all washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They are invested with the snowy, spotless robe of the Redeemer’s righteousness. “This,” says an eloquent writer,‡ “is the only garb which a child of Adam can wear before the throne of God. And though the apparel of some may be more curiously wrought and exquisitely embroidered than that of others, though the hand of the beautifying Spirit may have made it ‘raiment of needle-work’—the hue and lustre of each is the same. Every spirit in glory wears the vesture radiant with redeeming right-

* Rev. vii. 14.

† Heb. xi. 37.

‡ Rev. J. Hamilton, of London.

eousness—the snowy robe which speaks of the fountain opened, and which will commemorate through eternity, the blood of the Lamb."

The employment of the saints in heaven is also described in this glorious vision. They serve God. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."* "They cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."† "And his servants shall serve him."‡

What a contrast is there between the service of God on earth, and in heaven! Here, all our divine services are imperfectly performed: there, all is perfection itself. Here, when the spirit is often willing, the flesh is weak, and soon wearied, even in the sweetest seasons of devotion and heavenly meditation: there "they rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."§ And again, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."||

The employment of redeemed saints will be that of everlasting praise and adoration. They

* Rev. vii. 15.

† Rev. vii. 10.

‡ Rev. xxii. 3.

§ Rev. iv. 8.

|| Rev. iv. 11.

will praise and admire the Saviour, for his unbounded love and goodness to them. They will contemplate that glorious salvation, of which "the prophets have inquired and searched diligently," and which "the angels desire to look into." Redemption and salvation by Christ will constitute their unending theme; in the contemplation of which, their souls shall be lost in wonder, love and praise.

A crucified Saviour will be the wonder of heaven, and will employ ransomed souls in holy meditations through an inconceivable eternity. "Christ crucified," says an excellent old divine,* "is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all eternity. Eternity itself will be too short, in which to unfold the wonders of redeeming love, or to speak the praises of that blessed Redeemer who was crucified on Calvary for a sinful world. With increasing wonder and admiration shall that ransomed host, who stand upon Mount Zion, eternally search into the wonders of Christ's redeeming love as manifested to them. And all the redeemed, casting their crowns before the throne in token of their own unworthiness, shall unite in one long, loud, adoring anthem of praise; in one grand, everlasting chorus: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was

* Bishop Billington in *Origines Sacrae*, lib. 3, c. 6.

slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. ‘Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.’* They sing unceasing praises to him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. ‘Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.’† ‘They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!’”‡

Such is the employment of heaven; and its blessed inhabitants shall have power and ability to worship and serve God without weariness, forever.

The saints shall be perfectly happy in the presence of Christ. Free from all sorrow, they shall possess immortal joys in the presence of Him who sitteth on the throne. They shall not know what sorrow is any more. All tears shall be wiped away; for “He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall

* Rev. v. 12, 18.

† Rev. i. 5.

‡ Rev. xv. 3, 4.

hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”*

Here, the saints weep, and wail, and experience the distressing calamities and sorrows of mortal life. They feel the mutations of this ever varying scene. They are often in the depths of adversity and distress. They also experience changes in the spiritual life. To-day they may be on Pisgah, with heaven in their view, rejoicing; to-morrow, in the valley of Baca, weeping. To-day, the sunshine of Christianity may illumine their path; to-morrow they may wander about, enveloped in spiritual darkness. Here, the dearest ties are cut asunder, and the tenderest cords broken; which causes the heart to overflow with sorrow. Our friends die, and tears trickle down our cheeks; and perhaps we ourselves go down with sorrow to the grave. “Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure.”†

Thus the saints keenly feel the sorrows of this mortal state; but in heaven, “God shall

* Rev. v. 15, 17.

† Psalm lxxx.

wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."*

In heaven, the saints shall obtain everlasting joy. "Everlasting joy shall be unto them."† "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."‡ "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."§ And then "the days of thy mourning shall be ended."|| Our joy in heaven will be full, satisfying, and eternal.

The redeemed shall be free from all the sufferings, pains, and diseases that afflict humanity, and render this mortal life one continual scene of distress. In that happy world, "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."¶

Immortal health and vigor bloom in heaven. Sin, the cause of sickness, and pain, and sor-

* Rev. xxi. 4.

† Isaiah lxi. 7.

‡ Isaiah li. 11.

§ Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6.

|| Is. 2. 21.

¶ Is. xxxiii. 24.

row, shall be excluded from that blessed world. There, no tears bedew the cheek, no sorrows rend the heart, no pain is felt, no dissolution is feared ; for death itself is swallowed up in victory. "And there shall be no more death."

This is nothing but a dying world. Here, death strikes its dart, and cuts down our dearest friends. Perhaps he who now reads these lines may have stood over the dying bed of a dear relative or friend, and, with bitter sorrow, taken the last farewell, and witnessed the death-struggles of him or her whom he loved.

Death annually sweeps off a multitude of the human race. The sun now shines upon the graves of thousands, who, but a year ago, bloomed with health and vigor. Where are they now ? Gone. Now they are numbered among the dead. Now, clad with all the habiliments of the grave, they lie cold and lifeless in death's narrow house—in the grave's dismal mansion.

In heaven there shall be no more death, nor painful separation of kindred souls. Eternal life shall be enjoyed by the blessed inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. The last enemy shall have been destroyed. Then will God say, concerning his redeemed ones," "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death : O death, I will be thy plague :

O grave, I will be thy destruction."* Then, "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality: then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."†

In those celestial mansions, all the immortal sons of God shall meet in blissful harmony and adoring praise, to be forever with the Lord.

The saints shall enjoy eternal rest in heaven. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest."‡ They shall be perfectly holy and happy; and shall eternally bask in the sunshine of God's immediate presence, and drink of those perennial streams that issue from the fountain of life. The Lamb shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters."§

* Hosea xiii. 14. † 2 Cor. xv. 53, 54. ‡ Job. iii. 17.

§ "The Godhead is a boundless sea, on which the thin island of creation floats; and though the region be ever so dry and arid—a burning Baca—and though the object be ever so bleak and bald—a grim Horeb, a flinty rock—it needs only the touch of the prophet's rod, and forthwith a fountain springs as exhaustless as that divine perfection whence it flows. In that better country the Horeb never staunches, and the Baca never dries: the fountains play perpetually, and the waters ever live; and the Lamb is familiar with them all. To the woody brink of one he leads his white-robed followers; and in its fringing glories and populous profound, they read the riches of creative power and skill. To the melodious verge of another he conducts them and

The saints shall spend an everlasting day of light and blessedness in Immanuel's land; "and there shall be no night there." Eternal day smiles in those blessed regions. "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."*

In that bright world which the saints are going to possess, all will be irradiated by the glory of God and of the Lamb. The glorious Sun of righteousness will illuminate the heavenly world, the celestial city. "Thy sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."† "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine

in the fountain of light which gushes high, and flings its rainbows wide; in the balm scattered by its wafted dews, and the song with which the branches wave, they hear it endlessly repeated, 'God is love.' And to another still he guides them; and simple as the margin looks, and limpid as the waters are, it dilates and deepens as they gaze; deepens, till it mocks the longest line; widens, till Gabriel's eye can see no shore; and in its fathomless abyss, and ever-retreating bound, they recognize the divine unsearchableness. In Paradise, every fountain lives, and each fountain is a lesson full of God."—Rev. J. HAMILTON.

* Is. ix. 20.

† Is. x. 19.

in it; for the glory of God did lighte a it, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there.”*

The saints “shall inherit all things,” and “reign with Christ forever and ever.” Such is the blessedness of the saints; and to crown all their heavenly bliss, it will be eternal. Heaven is a state of never-ending bliss. Eternity stamps an infinite value on celestial happiness.

“O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss, is bliss.”

With regard to perpetuity, what a striking contrast there is between earthly and heavenly joys! How transient are all sublunary pleasures? “Passing away,” is indelibly stamped upon all that is terrestrial. “The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.”†

Youth and beauty, health and strength, riches and honor are passing away. Incessant changes characterize this globe, and all its inhabitarts; but no such changes are known in heaven.

“Lord, I long to be at home,
Where these changea never come!

* Rev. xxi. 23 -25.

† 1 John ii. 17.

Where the saints no winter fear,
Where 'tis spring throughout the year;
How unlike this state below!
There the flowers unwithering blow,
There no chilling blasts annoy,
All is love, and bloom, and joy."

The joys of the Christian's happy home never end. The pleasures which are at God's right hand endure for ever.

"Oh yes! those sweet words for ever, shall be attached to every thing in glory. You shall eat of the tree of life; drink of the water of life; wear the crown of life; you shall be made a pillar in the temple of God, and there shall be no more going out."

But oh! what is the for ever of heaven; who can describe it? who can comprehend vast eternity, the measure of the saint's bliss?

"Were the house you inhabit," says a very pious writer,* "to be filled with the finest sand, and then emptied so slowly that but the smallest grain should be taken out once in ten thousand years, how many millions of ages should pass away before the last grain were removed! yet, compared with eternity, these countless years would be like the twinkling of an eye. Were the mighty seas which dash their waves upon

* Rev. J. G. Pike.

so many shores, to be suddenly changed into one mass of ink, and then to be employed in numbering down figures, and the last figure to signify a million of years, what countless ages would be numbered down before the seas were emptied; yet he who wrote the last figure might say, 'These ages are not eternity; they are nothingness itself, compared with that; less than one drop to all the sea; less than one moment to all these infinite years; they are like a tale that is told; or a sigh that is forgotten.'

Were this vast world one mass of sand, and were the Most High, by his infinite power, to create as many worlds as there might be grains of sand in this; and were he then to commission a ministering angel to destroy them all, by removing grain after grain, yet so slowly that he should remove but one grain in a million of years, what millions, and millions, and millions of years, beyond all thought and conception, would pass away before one world were thus destroyed! and O, what before all these numbers were! What an eternity would be here! An eternity! no, not a moment, compared with it. Sand after sand would be removed, though at so infinitely slow a rate; world after world would be destroyed; and the angel would finish his task, but not finish eternity. Eternity would be eternity still. One grain of sand would bear

some proportion to these numberless worlds; one moment to these countless millions of ages; but all these would bear none to eternity; when they were passed, it would still be ‘beginning—rather beginning to begin.’” Such is the forever of heaven.

Eternity! who can grasp the immense idea which this short word conveys? When millions and millions of ages shall have passed away, the blessed inhabitants of Immanuel’s land will be young in immortality, and there will still be stretched before them an “evermore,” in which they will enjoy perfect blessedness at God’s right hand.

Oh! what a blessed, happy home is heaven. “And what a home for us to return to and abide in forever! A home prepared before the foundation of the world. A home in the many mansions; a home in the innermost circle of creation, nearest the throne and heart of God; a home whose peace shall never be broken by the sound of war or tempest, whose brightness shall never be overcast by the remotest shadow of a cloud. How solacing to the weary spirit, to think of a resting-place so near, and that resting-place our Father’s house, where we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: where the sun shall not light on us, nor any heat; where the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed us,

and lead us to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes."*

O! how near is our happy home—it is just within sight. How near, how very near is eternity: it is even at the door!

Christian reader, you shall soon, very soon, reach your happy home. Already your earthly course may be nearly terminated. One step more, and you will have gained the happy shores of Immanuel's land. Having crossed the tempestuous ocean of life, you will enjoy the refreshing breezes of heaven, and the calm repose of the saint's everlasting home. Your redemption is drawing near. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand." A few more suns will rise and set, and then the unsetting sun shall rise in the "new heavens." A few more days, and then will dawn the eternal day. A few more fleeting years will pass swiftly by, and then the everlasting cycles of eternity will roll on. You will soon exchange a cross of suffering on earth, for a crown of glory in heaven, immortal, incorruptible, and that fadeth not away. You will soon join with the whole family of God, in

* H. Bonar, author of "The Night of Weeping," and "The Morning of Joy;" two charming little volumes, written in a pleasing style.

the contemplation of Christ's redeeming love. One theme,—that of redemption, shall then employ every soul, and every tongue shall be tuned to the praises of Immanuel. With your redeemed companions in glory, you will soon unite in that sweet song, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own (yea, his own most precious) blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

The time is short. "The Lord is at hand." "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."*

* Rev. xxiii. 20.

Christ, and Him Crucified.



P R E F A C E.

IN presenting these pages to the Christian public, the object of the author is simply to exhibit Christ and Him crucified as the only hope of a lost world.

In this essay we have endeavored to speak of the Excellency of the subject—of the Person of Christ—of the Glory of Christ—of Christ Crucified—of Redemption by Christ—of the New Song in Glory—of the Sum and Substance of the Gospel—of the only Hope of the Sinner—and of the Cross of Christ. This volume is now commended to the blessing of God. May He grant that, through these pages, some despairing soul may be led to hope in Christ and Him crucified. May sinners be attracted by the glory of the cross of Jesus; may saints be built up in their “most holy faith;” and to the Eternal Father, Son, and Spirit, a triune God, be all the praise. And now, dear reader, in the language of William Mason, “I commend thee to God, and to the word of his grace, wishing thee sweet comfort in perusing these meditations. If our Lord give thee as much in reading as I

have found in writing them, thou wilt have great reason for love and praise. Accept them, as the labor of one who is no prophet, neither a prophet's son, but who would glory in being a saved sinner, by the cross of Jesus;" and whose delight it ever is to dwell on the blessed theme of redeeming love.

"Blest Saviour, with delight I dwell
On themes no mortal tongue can tell;
The glory of thy cross exceeds
All human and angelic deeds."

Blessea Jesus! Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer. Amen.

"Though billows of sorrow should roll,
And surround me on every side;
Yet thou canst the tempest control,
My Saviour, my Refuge, and Guide.

Thy smile makes the soul to expand,
And graces celestial to grow;
With rapture I gaze on the land
Where pleasures incessantly flow.

Tis there my dear Saviour resides,
In fulness of glory and grace;
And there the pure river that glides
Through regions of joy and of peace.

The life-yielding tree there shall spread
Its branches luxuriantly round;
The saints robed in white shall be fed
With fruits from Emanuel's ground.

"How deep is the myst'ry of grace!
The theme of bright seraphs above;
To see the sweet beams of his face,
To dwell in the essence of love!

"My Father! thy nature is love;
In Jesus thine image I view!
Oh may I behold him above,
And praise him eternally too.

"May this my delight ever be,
On earth his rich grace to record;
And when from these temples set free
With joy ascend up to the Lord."

ARGYLE, N. Y., Nov., 1856.



CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED.

CHAPTER I.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE SUBJECT.

"Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."—
PHIL. iii. 8,

IN the physical, intellectual and moral world there are to be found many important and interesting subjects. The whole circle of science embraces many topics of absorbing interest to the man of genius. Human learning exalts man to that grand elevation of intellectual greatness, from which he views nature in all her magnificence, revels amid her beauties, and roams, in imagination, from star to star, from sun to sun, where the Deity reigns in all the grandeur of his attributes. No wonder, then, that human learning should be so highly prized, and so assiduously sought after by rational beings. But there is a subject of infinitely greater

importance than all science or human knowledge; a subject which above all others may be denominated sublimely great and interesting; and which, to the thirsty soul of a penitent sinner, is most refreshing and exhilarating: that theme is Christ and him crucified. All the holy angels that surround the throne of God, with all the redeemed in glory, look upon this subject with unbounded delight and increasing admiration, but can never fully comprehend its sublimity and moral grandeur. It is the unending theme of heaven, the joy of saints, the astonishment of angels. It is a subject too lofty for human skill; angelic intellect can never comprehend it. We cannot adequately declare its vastness, much less comprehend its fullness. It is inexhaustible in its nature. The highest intelligences that move amidst the glories of Paradise cannot fathom its profundity. The mighty oceans that divide continents, and dash their waves on numberless shores, may be exhausted. Not so the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. The countless luminaries that decorate the nocturnal sky, and light up the canopy of heaven, may be extinguished in eternal darkness, but this glorious theme shall shine forever in the perfection of beauty. When the last lines of earth's history shall have been written, yea, when this terrestrial globe itself

shall have been wrapped in the flames of the judgment day, and all the redeemed brought home to glory, Christ and him crucified will form the all-absorbing subject that shall engage the capacious and exalted minds of heaven's blissful inhabitants, in holy meditation and rapturous delight, through a blessed and glorious eternity.

Then, believer, if you are to spend eternity thus, should you not employ the short space of time which intervenes between you and the realms of glory, in the contemplation of this wonder of wonders, this mystery of godliness, a crucified Saviour? May God in his infinite mercy grant that you may be led to form the resolution of the great Apostle, who, when writing to the Corinthians, declares, "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

"Christ crucified," said an old divine,* "is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in, to all eternity. Other knowledge makes men's minds giddy and flatulent; this settles and composes them: other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and opinions of themselves; this brings them to the truest view of themselves and thereby to humility and

Bishop Stillingfleet.

sobriety: other knowledge leaves men's hearts as it found them; this alters them, and makes them better. So transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of Christ crucified above the sublimest speculations in the world." Should you not then spend much of your time in meditating on this glorious theme? Where in the whole world can you find a subject so excellent, so consoling, so animating as this? O, then, study Christ and him crucified. Be diligent and ardent in the pursuit of this knowledge, for it alone can guide the Christian to immortal bliss.

A knowledge of Christ and him crucified, is indispensable to salvation. "I am the way," says Christ, "and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."† By that great atonement which he made on Calvary, our blessed Saviour has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. The radiancy which the knowledge of a crucified Saviour emits amidst the darkness of mortality, dispels the gloom that overspreads the mind, and dissipates the darkness that hovers around the pathway to immortality. This

knowledge makes the Christian's eye bright with hope, and animates him on his way to the mansions of glory. It tears asunder the veil that hides the unseen world from mortal view, and holds up to the Christian's enraptured gaze, the untold glories of heaven. It points directly to the only sacrifice for sin, Jesus Christ, the bleeding Lamb of God. It leads you to Calvary, where, amid the affecting and overpowering scenes exhibited, it opens to your astonished view the portals of heaven, and pours in a flood of light and glory that dazzles the eye of the Christian, sheds effulgence around the throne of God, and beams with unclouded splendor through eternity itself.

The saving knowledge of Christ and him crucified, leads the sinner to glory and happiness at God's right hand. It will crown him with unutterable bliss. It will prepare him for the enjoyment of heaven; for the reception of that unfading wreath of glory which shall be entwined around the brow of the faithful; for that glittering diadem which shall be placed upon his head; and for those robes of salvation with which he shall be eternally arrayed before the throne of God. How important then, is this knowledge which leads to such blessed results, to such unspeakable glory! O that each of us

may become experimentally acquainted with Christ and him crucified.

Permit me to urge this momentous subject upon your serious consideration. You should give it a thorough investigation. Your immortal destiny is embraced within its ample scope. To neglect it, will be at the peril of your eternal happiness. O then, we beseech you with the utmost compassion for your immortal soul, to attend to this glorious message, the proclamation of a crucified Saviour, and eternal life through him. This great and all-important theme, the glory of which no mortal tongue can express, is more intimately connected with your present and future welfare than all other subjects within the range of human acquisition.

We would not, in this little volume, display before you the airy speculations of philosophy or the various charms of human science; but we would, with ardent language, hold up to your view, Christ and him crucified, as your only hope; as the only hope of a lost world. Here, sinner, is your hiding-place. Under the shadow of Him who once groaned and bled on Calvary, you can find eternal repose. "And a man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest;*" as rivers of waters in a dry

* Is. xxxii. 2.

place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Jesus Christ is here set forth in all the richness of his grace. He is here offered, freely offered to dying sinners. Embrace him as your only Saviour; while passing through this "weary land," through this wilderness world, lean on Him, who will guide you safely to glory. In Him, you will experience that joy which the world cannot impart, and that peace of God, which passeth all understanding. By that blessed side which was once pierced with the soldier's spear, you will enjoy the favors and smiles of a reconciled God.

From those deep wounds that were inflicted on the Saviour's immortal form, fountains of joy, as inexhaustible as the ocean of divine perfection itself, will flow in the richest streams of grace, to refresh, invigorate and animate your soul. O! there is something about Calvary so mysterious in its nature—so glorious in its results. Time can never disclose nor vast eternity unravel those things connected with that affecting scene, displayed when the Son of God bowed his head and exclaimed "It is finished."

This subject embraces this mystery, and consequently will be the theme of the redeemed to all eternity. It comprehends the glorious plan of redemption and all the wonders of Christ's redeeming love. It does not lead the sinner to

Sinai, and there leave him amid the dreadful thunder and lightning and flame and smoke: no, it gently draws him to Calvary, that life-giving mount, where the unbounded love of God for sinners once glowed in the bosom of his Son, with more than human splendor; where it beamed forth in all the effulgence of the divinity, when the holy Jesus hung a suffering, bleeding, victim on the ignominious cross. How glorious is such a subject! It is full of Christ and salvation through him. It vividly displays the matchless mercy, and boundless love of God to a lost world.

"Oh! how matchless is this mercy!
How unbounded is this love!
'Tis our joy on earth to feel it;
'Tis the theme of saints above."

Let the knowledge of Christ and him crucified dwell in you richly. Endeavor to know more and more about the person of your glorious Redeemer; about that wonderful decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem, and that all-sufficient atonement which he effected on Calvary. Christ and him crucified is the sweetest, noblest theme on which a soul ever dwelt. Holy angels on their lofty thrones in glory, desire to stoop from the heights of celestial bliss, and look into this wonderful abyss of love and

mercy to fallen man—the gift of a Saviour—a glorious salvation. Well may we, who are the objects of such unprecedented love, raise our grateful hearts to the God of heaven, and shout forth in language like this: Glory to God in the highest for such peace and good-will toward men.

Christian, may Christ and him crucified ever be your delightful theme on earth, till mortality is swallowed up of life, till you are admitted into the glorious presence of Immanuel, and see him face to face, and begin your unceasing song, unto him that loved you and washed you from your sins in his own blood. Can you not now say with the Apostle, “ Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ;”* and O that every reader could join with us in the following beautiful, glowing lines of the poet,

— “Thou my all !
 My theme ! my inspiration ! and my crown !
 My soul’s ambition, pleasure, wealth ; my world ;
 My light in darkness ! and my life in death !
 My boast through time ! bliss through eternity !
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man !
 To man of man the meanest, even to me,
 My sacrifice my God !”—YOUNG.

* Phil. iii. 8.

CHAPTER II.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

"Thou art fairer than the children of men."—PSALM xlv. 2.

"My meditation of him shall be sweet."—PSALM civ. 34.

BEFORE we dwell on the melting story of Calvary, or exhibit to you a crucified Saviour, or afford a display of his glorious atonement, let us advert to the divine person and character of our Immanuel. Let us admire his glorious perfections. A saving knowledge of Christ will constitute the foundation of our immortal joys; will lead us to eternal life, and the highest state of felicity in heaven above. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."* O, that we might obtain a glimpse of the matchless person of Christ! O, that we might behold "the King, in his beauty." Surely then would our sight and eyes be turned away from viewing vanity. If there is an object in the universe that should attract our attention, excite our admiration, warm our affections, and

* John xvii. 3.

demand our love; surely it is the glorious Saviour, the blessed Son of God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Christ is the most glorious being in the universe of God. Blessed Jesus! reveal thyself unto us in all thy transcendent loveliness, in all thy surpassing beauty. "Thou art fairer than the children of men;" "the chiefest among ten thousand;" "yea, thou art altogether lovely;" "thou art the blooming rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." Manifest thyself unto us as thou dost not unto the world. Gladdden our guilty souls with the beams of thy mercy and grace. Unfurl the banner of thy wondrous love over us; encircle us in the arms of thy compassion, and lift upon us the light of thy gracious countenance.

We can know but little, comparatively, of the excellence and glory of Christ's person, until we see him on his heavenly throne, in all his unveiled glory. Then shall we see him as he is, face to face, and forever behold his matchless beauty. What a glorious sight will that be, to see the Redeemer shining in the perfection of beauty. What a blessed privilege, to dwell for ever in the presence of the great King, to surround the radiant throne of heaven, and amid the splendors of the celestial Paradise, to sound through endless ages the notes of seraphic

praise, to him that redeemed us from eternal misery with his own most precious blood!

Gentle reader, seek Christ now; believe on him; view him with the eye of faith, as your only Lord and Saviour, and in a little while faith shall be turned into sight, into heavenly vision, and you will enjoy the presence and society of your beloved Redeemer through a glorious eternity. Remember, young reader, that Christ has said "those that seek me early shall find me."* May the Lord in his mercy grant that you and I may find Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus, the Son of God. This will prove our everlasting comfort. Through time and through eternity, Christ will be our unchanging friend.

To the believer, Christ is all in all. Amid all the vacillating scenes and heart-rending sorrows of mortality, he is ever with him, manifesting his grace and sustaining him in every trial; and in the last hour of mortal existence, when the believer is standing on the verge of the grave, Christ is by him, cheering his departing soul with the hope of eternal glory, and guiding him safely through the swellings of Jordan to the promised land, the everlasting happy home of God's children. In the hour of death, the be-

* Prov. viii. 17.

liever is enabled to exclaim, "Oh ! I would not give up Christ for all the world. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

Now, is Christ precious to you? Do you desire to know more and more about him? Is he formed in you, the hope of glory? If so, we trust you will follow us with a joyful heart in our presentation of his character and excellence as they are vividly portrayed in the Holy Scriptures. That blessed Redeemer who once hung a bleeding victim on Calvary; who endured the death of the cross there, is the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father in power and glory, possessing all the attributes of Deity.

The Scriptures plainly assert that Christ is God, the Creator of the universe. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* Christ bears the very image of the everlasting Father. Yes, the eternal Son of God, our blessed Saviour, is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. "Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word

* John i. 1, 3.

of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."*

Again, it is declared of Christ that he "is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell."† What a fulness of grace and glory dwells in the blessed Jesus!

And what divine power has he displayed in the works of creation! By his word, were all things made. He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. He only gave the command, and this world, with all its inhabitants, started into being. Such is his illimitable power, that he has created and sustained for ages, millions of fixed and moving worlds of light and glory. With unerring precision, he guides the

* Heb. i. 3.

† Col. i. 15, 19.

planets in their revolutions, and directs the comets in their flaming march. With an arm of omnipotence, he has bespangled the midnight sky with its glowing luminaries; and that same mysterious personage who endured the ignominious death of Calvary, has created this beautiful, green earth on which we tread; formed the moon in her silvery brightness, and kindled up the sun in all his glory. "By the word of the Lord, were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."* He has "measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."

Christ is the second person in the glorious Trinity, and is of equal power with God the Father, and God the Spirit. Yea he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," and as the Creator of the universe, he reigns, the omnipotent, Lord of heaven and earth. All power is intrusted to him, and all worlds are the offspring of his almighty fiat, the product of his creative skill. It is the same blessed Saviour who bled and died on earth "that spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea;

* Psalms xxxiii. 6.

that maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."

Christian, go out and gaze upon the clear, blue sky, when the solemn stillness of night pervades a slumbering world ; survey the countless glories of the starry firmament; view the numberless suns that shine above you ; think of the innumerable planets that revolve around these suns ; contemplate the mighty systems of worlds that move in celestial harmony and majesty through boundless space. Your Saviour made them all. Then think of his power, wisdom, and goodness as manifested in all his works. Think of his original glory and blessedness ; but above all, think of his amazing condescension and infinite love for you. He who hung out these brilliant orbs, once stooped from his celestial throne of glory to assume human nature, and bleed and die for you : yes, to die the death of the cross! He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!"* Wonderful condescension. Amazing love! Was there ever love like this, that led Christ to Calvary, there to lay down his

* Phil. x. 7. 8.

precious life for sinners! No! the annals of time do not furnish a parallel; neither is it to be found in the records of eternity. Christ, the only begotten Son of God, lay in the bosom of the Father from all eternity; possessing untold glory with him. But out of infinite compassion and boundless love for his children, his redeemed, he consented, for a time, to veil that glory in humanity, and bleed upon the accursed tree. He became partaker of flesh and blood. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."* He gave his blessed body to be broken, and his precious blood to be shed for sinners. For you, dear believer, did the Lord of glory suffer. That he might redeem you from the curse of a broken law, and thus rescue you from eternal misery in the regions of darkness and despair, he assumed your nature. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."† In Christ, the divine and human natures are admirably united in one

* Heb. i. 14.

† Heb. ii. 16.

glorious person. He is truly God and truly man. He is our Creator, our Preserver, our bountiful Benefactor; and yet he is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He is our near kinsman; our elder brother; our gracious friend, who loveth at all times; our glorious Redeemer.

In our nature, Christ suffered and died for us; in our nature he rose triumphant from the grave; and he now wears it before the throne of God. O how highly has Christ exalted human nature! He has elevated it to the right hand of God, to the greatest honors and the brightest state of felicity in the heaven of heavens. In glory the redeemed shall be made like Christ; their bodies shall shine like his glorious body.

Says an Apostle, "we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* At his glorious appearing on the resurrection morning, Christ shall call forth our sleeping dust and "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."† Then shall we be with him, and be entirely like him to all eternity. Then shall we see him face to face in his heavenly kingdom, yes, we shall look into the very face of the

blessed Jesus, and behold in that countenance the expressions of tenderest love for us, his redeemed. Then shall we see what a lovely Saviour we have; and through eternal ages we shall be contemplating the glorious person of our Redeemer. Then shall we discern those excellencies in the person of Christ, which are now obscured by the veil of mortality. "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."* Precious Saviour! Thy name is as ointment poured forth. Thou art all our salvation and desire. We love thee, because thou hast first loved us. Whom have we in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that we desire besides thee. Thou art our way to the Father, the way in which the redeemed journey through a wilderness world to the heavenly Canaan. Thou art the blessed day-star which illuminates our path through a bewildering world, and guides us safely over life's tempestuous ocean into the harbor of eternal glory.

Blessed Redeemer, may I love and prize thee more and more on earth, till, prepared for those happy mansions above, I bid adieu to this sinful, sorrowful world, enter into the joy of my

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

Lord, and raise a never-ending song of praise
in glory to thee my Almighty Saviour.

“Almighty Jesus, make me thine;
Oh! wash me in thy blood divine,
Preserve my soul from every sin,
And reign the sov’reign Lord within.

“Oh! for a heart of faith and love,
To taste the Saviour’s richest grace,
To emulate the choirs above,
Who ever see his blissful face.

“Blest spirit! beautify my soul
With humble joy and holy fear;
Thy pow’r can make the wounded whole,
And bring each gospel blessing near.

“Descend and dwell within my heart;
The Saviour’s image let us bear;
Then bid me hence with joy depart,
And angels’ bliss forever share.”

What a precious Saviour we have to choose as ours. One who is so amiable and excellent in his person. One who is infinitely able to save us. One who delights in our salvation, and rejoices over us to do us good. Concerning his people, Christ says, “I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good · but I will put my

fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good."* What mercies flow from the Saviour of sinners! When we look at what our Redeemer has accomplished for us, well may we, with wonder and astonishment, exclaim, "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee; before the sons of men." How deeply impressed with the divine goodness was the prophet, when, borne along and overwhelmed with the sublimity of his rapturous theme, he breaks forth into this lofty song:

"Sing, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O Israel ; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty ; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy ; he will rest in his love ; he will rejoice over thee with singing."†

There is none like Christ. He spake as never man spake. When he sojourned in this vale of tears, he went about doing good ; words of compassion flowed from his gracious lips ; he comforted the afflicted, healed the diseased, and raised the dead. At his omnipotent voice, "the eyes of the blind were opened, and the ears of

* Jer. xxxii. 40, 41.

† Zeph. iii. 14, 17

the deaf unstopped; the lame man eaped as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sung."

How compassionate was the blessed Jesus, to the sons and daughters of affliction, to the perishing multitudes around him, when he trod this earth, clothed with the garb of humanity; and now that he is in heaven, invested with all his original glory, he has the same eye of pity, and the same heart of love for dying sinners on earth. Though he reigns in glory, yet he now says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." One compassionate look from Christ, which draws out the soul in love after him, and kindles up the affections in holy desires after sweet communion with him, is worth more than all the treasures of the world. A saving interest in the glorious Redeemer, will put us into the possession and enjoyment of those "unsearchable riches" which will endure when this bewildering world, with all its fascinations, with all its grandeur, shall have passed away.

Does your heart pant after these durable riches? Then look up to Christ, admire him? contemplate his adorable, mysterious person. Open the blessed volume of inspiration and read his glorious character. "Search the scriptures," says the Saviour, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of

me." Trace him in his wonderful transition from heaven to earth. He veils his glory in humanity. He assumes human nature, and becomes an infant of days, a man of sorrow through life; a bleeding victim on Calvary. For you, sinner, he yields to the stroke of death; and is laid in a tomb. But see him bursting the fetters of the grave, and ascending to glory. Thither follow him. On the wings of faith soar to the heavenly Canaan. Your divine Redeemer is there, radiant in glory. Before him, all the redeemed bow in token of humble adoration and praise. While they gaze upon his wondrous bright form, one song, "worthy is the Lamb that was slain," employs them all. In heaven, all are admiring and praising the "Lamb that stands on Mount Zion:" There, every redeemed sinner desires to know more and more about the adorable Saviour. O believer, the more you study Christ the more will you admire and praise him. Wonderful in his nature, glorious in his person, and dear in those relations in which he stands to you, he demands your whole heart, your affections, all your grateful thoughts. While you walk by faith through a wilderness world, you should constantly keep Christ in your view—in your thoughts—in your mind; till in the full blaze of heaven's glory, you behold him, in the midst of the celestial

throne, as "a Lamb that had been slain," and eternally admire his matchless person, and his boundless grace. O blessed Jesus! may the desire of our soul now be to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. May we remember thee upon beds, and meditate on thee in the night-watches. And through all our earthly pilgrimage may we ever think of thee, and of thy great goodness.

Christian, let your love for an unseen Saviour increase more and more. Now "whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." In the mean time, may your eye—that eye of faith which views the eternal world, and those glorious "things which are not seen," ever be directed to the bleeding "Lamb of God," which taketh away your sins; which "taketh away the sin of the world!" Be always longing and "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."*

* Titus ii. 13, 14.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole
And calms the troubled breast;
"Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest."

CHAPTER I II.

THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

‘ Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory.’—
JOHN, xvii. 24.

IN order that we may see the personal excellency of God’s beloved Son, let us contemplate his glory. That amazing humiliation and painful death to which Christ submitted, for sinners, will appear still more astonishing, when we reflect upon that majesty and glory with which he was invested before time began to flow. In Christ, we behold uncreated glory. No created glory was ever like his. Christ’s glory shone from all eternity. Before the sun beamed in the heavens, or the moon walked in silvery brightness; before the stars glittered in the deep blue sky, or the earth sprang into existence; Christ, the blessed Son of God, lay in the bosom of the everlasting Father, enjoying equal glory with him. The glorious Redeemer of a lost world was set up from everlasting. Hear his own declaration, “I was set up from

everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," and surely the glory of the eternal Son must be as old as himself. Yes, Christ has always been, and will ever continue to be "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." When he left the bosom of his Father, and the regions of bliss, and visited this fallen world with the message of redeeming love, he only veiled his glory in humanity. He lost nothing of his original glory by his assumption of human nature. He was as truly "the brightness of his Father's glory" when he lay in the manger at Bethlehem, when he had not where to lay his head on earth, or when he hung a dying victim on Calvary's cross, as he was before his incarnation, or as he now is, in his glorified state at the right hand of God. Though his glory was veiled in a human form, when he tabernacled in the flesh, yet now and then a beam of that glory darted through his human nature, proclaiming to all around that he was divine. The disciples beheld the glory of their Redeemer. Says the beloved John, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*

* John i. 14.

Says another faithful follower of the Lord, and an eye witness of his majesty, "He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."*

On mount Tabor, Peter, James and John got a glimpse of the Saviour's glory, which made them feel as if heaven had come down upon earth. There Christ's glory beamed forth in heavenly splendor, "when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."† There Moses and Elias also appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." What a glorious, sacred spot! How nearly allied to heaven! What is all the splendor of the universe, contrasted with the resplendent scene of Tabor! How gloomy! Contrasted with that dazzling, overpowering brightness which there emanated from the blessed Jesus, the sun is darkness itself. Never had there been such a vivid manifestation of the glory of Christ on earth, as was then displayed to the astonished disciples. Well might Peter exclaim, 'Lord, it is good for us to

* 2 Peter i. 17, 18.

† Matt. xvii. 2

be here : if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Delightful abode ! To dwell with Jesus : to be overshadowed with his glory !

" If heaven be thus glorious, Lord,
Why must I keep from thence ?
What folly is't that makes me loth
To die, and go from hence ?"

Hasten on, O joyful day, when I shall be admitted into the palace of the great King, when I shall see him in his beauty, in his glory ; when I shall be made "a pillar in the temple of God, and go no more out;" when I shall dwell with Christ, yes, with that glorious Saviour, whose blessed side was once pierced for me.

Happy, unspeakably happy, will those be whom Christ will bring to behold his glory ! Their bliss no mortal tongue can express. They will reign with Jesus, and behold his glory forever and ever. "To him that overcometh," says Christ, "will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." It is the will of Christ, that all his people may be with him, that they may behold his glory. Mark that beautiful prayer of his, in the 17th

chapter of John : "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." For what is it that Christ prays so fervently here ? It is, that those given him by his Father, may not only be with him, but that they may also behold his glory. That prayer has not ascended to heaven in vain. It has been heard on high. In heaven, all the redeemed around the throne of God, are now beholding the glory of Christ. All "the spirits of just men made perfect," are admiring his beauty. This prayer will be fully answered, when Christ shall bring forth the head-stone of his living, glorious temple with shoutings ; when he shall exclaim, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me ;" when every member of his precious flock shall be gathered home to himself ; when even the feeblest lamb shall be housed from the storm. Then shall we all be with Christ ; then shall we behold his glory ; not veiled as it was in his humiliation, but blazing forth in full, unclouded splendor.

The glory of Christ will make eternity itself one bright, unsullied day of bliss. This glory will be manifested to the redeemed ; they will spend the revolving ages of a blissful eternity in beholding it. It will irradiate the mansions of bliss ; it will adorn with immortal splendor

and beauty every inhabitant of those mansions. It will decorate with blooming youth countless millions. It will light up a bright and glorious abode for the redeemed. It will constitute the purest, noblest, brightest heaven. What is heaven but being with Christ, and beholding his glory. This is heaven! This is blessedness! This is the bliss of saints! O blessed privilege, to be with Christ, to behold his glory. And all believers shall soon be forever with him. What a happy state to be ever with the Lord, beholding his glory! This made Paul long to be dissolved, that he might be with Christ. "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better."* Immediately after death, the soul of the believer is with Christ, beholding his glory, "absent from the body, and present with the Lord." How many have longed for a sight of this glory of Christ. How often has it cheered the heart of the dying Christian, and filled his soul with the hope of a glorious immortality. A few hours before the great Dr. Owen breathed his last, a friend informed him that he had just been putting his work "On the glory of Christ, to press, to whom the Dr. responded, "I am glad to hear that that performance is put to press;"

* Phil. i. 23.

then lifting up his hands, and raising his eyes as in a rapture, he exclaimed, "But O brother Payne, the long looked for day is come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever done yet, or was capable of doing in this world."

A great part of heaven's happiness, will consist in beholding the glory of Christ; yes, the glory of Christ will fill heaven with unutterable bliss.

O blessed Jesus, show us thy glory; may it illuminate our pathway through a world of darkness; may it guide us to thee, the uncreated source of life, light and glory. With thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light. Wean our affections from a world that is so soon to be wrapped in flames. Elevate our views above the transient scenes of earth, its fading, deceitful joys, to the permanent and enrapturing bliss of heaven. May we be going up through this wilderness world leaning on thee, our Beloved. While on earth may we live to thy glory; and when done with mortal life, when the messenger of death is sent to convey our immortal spirits home, may we be safely conducted "through death's dark vale" and Jordan's swelling stream, to the heights of Zion, the city of the great King, the heavenly Jerusalem, the celestial Canaan, where thou, blessed Saviour, reignest in everlasting glory.

Oh! that I felt my soul upborne
On pure devotion's wings,
Far above earth's deceitful joys
And sublunary things.

"Where thou, blessed Saviour, sitt'st enthroned
In everlasting light;
The glory of th' angelic host,
The source of their delight.

' There in thy blissful presence reigns
Immortal joy serene;
No wintry storms are heard to roar,
Nor desolation seen.

" Around thee flow unmixed delights,
Like rivers deep and wide;
While from ^{the} ocean of thy love,
Proceeds an endless tide.

" Can such a sinful creature, Lord,
Partake this wondrous grace,
To dwell with thee in heavenly bliss,
And view thy glorious face.

" Ah! then, let sin and earth usurp
My wayward heart no more;
Be thou, through life, my all in all,
My soul's unbounded store."

Have you obtained a glimpse of the glory of the Sufferer of Calvary? Is Christ glorious in your view, or does he appear "as a root out of a dry ground, having no form, nor comeliness, no beauty that you should desire him?" Is he, in

your estimation, “the chiefest among ten thousand” all lovely, all glorious; or do you “lightly esteem the rock of your salvation?” Have you seen Christ, in all his glory, not with the *body* eye, but with that of faith, which scans the heavens and views the Saviour there, as yours? Or have you no faith in God’s dear Son? Are you still rejecting the free offer of a crucified Saviour; still counting his precious blood an unholy thing? These are solemn questions which you are now called upon to answer. If you have never viewed Christ as your glorious Saviour, look to him now as such. Let faith spread her wings towards him. Believe on his glorious name; and “say not in thy heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above:) or who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is the word of faith which we preach.”*

To see Christ in the glory of his person, in the *fulness* of his grace and as our only Saviour, is the sight that affords perfect peace—that peace of God which passeth all understanding. This blessed sight fills the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory; elevates the sin-

* Rom. x. 6, 8.

ner's view above sublunary objects, to those blissful mansions in the skies, and cheers the believing soul, when standing on the threshold of eternity, with the hope of a glorious immortality. When we obtain a faith's view of Christ and his glory, how despicable do the unhallowed joys and pleasures of a dying world appear? Even now one beam of the Saviour's glory shining into our hearts, or the light of his countenance lifted upon us, will afford us more joy than all the glittering *wealth* of the world. Hear an eminent saint of *olden* times exclaim : "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."

You who have embraced the glorious Saviour will soon be made a partaker of his glory. "The glory which thou gavest me," says Christ, "I have given them." O wonderful! wonderful! not only to behold that glory, but to receive it ourselves! "The Lord will give glory." What shall we render to Him for all his gifts? "Bless the Lord O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Every step you take on earth will be a step heavenward. Constantly beholding the glory of Christ in the mirror of the word and ordinances, you will become more and more transformed into his likeness. "We all," says the apostle, "with open face beholding

as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."* In the face of Christ, we behold the glory of God, the brightness of the divinity, shining forth in *uncreated*, overpowering lustre. The holy Spirit illuminates our hearts, and enables us to discern this effulgence of divine glory.

"God, who first commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."†

Christ is crowned with all the radiance of the Deity. "In him dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily." "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "The word was made flesh," and the glory of God shall shine through that flesh through all eternity, and make that blessed form far more glorious than the midday sun. How glorious and exalted is Christ! Encircled with inconceivable glory and seated on the throne of heaven, he sways with uncontrollable power, the sceptre of the universe. There is a glory in the person of Christ that makes him unspeakably precious to believers. There is a glory in his perfections. There is a glory in his works.

* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

† 2 Cor. ix. 6.

"All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." Yes, Christ is not only glorious in his person, but also in his works. In the works of creation he is encircled with divine glory. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handy work;" and in that greater work—the redemption of a lost world,—he is crowned with incomprehensible glory, and exalted to the right hand of God. "Now, we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor."*

Dear believer, this glorious Saviour is yours. For you he died; for you he lives; for you he reigns the Lord of glory. With the church you may exclaim, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem;" "How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!"

How attractive, how desirable, how lovely, how glorious will Christ appear in heaven! How will his glory shine there! When we awake amid the splendors of immortality, the first object that will excite our admiration will be that glorious Redeemer, who loved us, and gave himself for us; whose dying groans were once uttered on Calvary; whose bleeding heart

* Heb. ii. 9

there showed the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of redeeming love! Then shall we see with our very eyes, Him who was, for us, taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain ;" but, oh ! we shall see him shining in effulgent glory.

The glory of the Man of Calvary will attract the eyes of all the redeemed above, and he will be forever "admired in all them that believe." The perpetual presence of Christ and the continued manifestation of his glory will always make heaven one noontide of light and blessedness. He will be continually before us, and his glory will be constantly beaming upon us ; and our sight will be so illuminated that we can steadily behold that glory. Now we see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face. Now, we could not possibly bear the full effulgence of that glory. It struck Paul to the earth with blindness when Jesus appeared to him, and when he "saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about him." And on the manifestation of a glorified Saviour, John falls to the earth as dead. But in heaven we shall gaze with intense delight upon the glorious sun of righteousness, shining in his meridian splendor. Blessed be God ! that sun once rose on our benighted world. That promise has been fulfilled, "Unto you that fear my name,

shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."* That "true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" pointing us to heaven, the region of eternal glory, once shone on earth. That light will eternally shine in the upper world in the celestial mansions. There Christ will always manifest himself to his people, in all his glory. There they will not have to cry with Moses, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." All shall see it. Every saint there shall be gazing forever upon the uncreated glory of Immanuel. O blessed sight!

Lord, prepare each of us for beholding this glory. Unite our hearts to thee, by faith. May we be growing in grace and in the knowledge of thee—our Lord and Saviour. Do thou, Almighty Saviour, preserve us from the snares and temptations of a world lying in wickedness, and finally present us faultless before the presence of thy glory with exceeding joy.

In his sublime vision of the glory of Christ, Isaiah thus speaks, "In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and

* Matt. iv. 2.

with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.* That this was the glory of Christ, which Isaiah saw, John, in the 12th chapter of his gospel, asserts, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." On the lonely isle of Patmos, the beloved disciple had a glorious revelation of the Son of God. Heaven opened and poured forth its glories upon him. He was fanned with its breezes. He stood bewildered and amazed amid its grand pageantry. But one form more glorious than all other objects, filled him with profound awe and consternation. It was the Lord Jesus. His countenance shone like the sun in his midday splendor. Glory beamed from every part of that blessed form, diffusing a flood of light on all around, and blazing far, far away into eternity. It was the dazzling form of the Lamb of God, in more than earthly transfiguration that appeared to the bewildered disciple. The description which he furnishes of this glorified personage is this, "I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden

* Isa. vi. 1, 3.

girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."* This is Jesus of Nazareth, the same Jesus on whose bosom the beloved disciple had so often leaned. How glorious does he appear now? So glorious, that John falls at his feet as dead. This is the same Jesus whom the dying Stephen saw standing on the right hand of God. When his cruel persecutors were about to imbrue their hands in the blood of this holy servant of God, he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

This, Christian, is the same Jesus whose glory you shall behold in heaven; whom you will love and praise and adore with unceasing delight and seraphic vigor, through eternity's rolling ages. Love and admire him now. Cleave closely to him, and you will soon see his glory. *You will soon be with Christ.* O happy thought!

* Rev. i. 12, 16.

Soon, very soon, shall the visions of earth vanish, and the darkness of mortality disappear before the rising glories of Immanuel's kingdom. The time is short; the period is just at hand, when we shall, with transporting joy, behold the dawning of that day which will never end, and the rising of that sun which will never set. Then "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." Raised in glory, and caught up from the flames of a burning, crumbling world, to meet the Lord in the air, "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe;" we shall, with him, soar to a brighter world above,—our everlasting happy home, where no sin ever defiles, where no tears ever flow, and where no death is ever feared. Entering into the golden city and its many mansions, we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,—with Moses and Elias,—with prophets and apostles, in the kingdom of God. Standing, not on Mount Tabor below, but on Mount Zion above; not with Moses and Elias alone, but with "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven;" we shall ever behold, contemplate and admire the glory of Him who is light of heaven, the brightness of God's glory. How gloriously will that celestial city, the home of the redeemed, be illuminated

with the presence of Immanuel! There, no natural light is required. "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine on it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."* There, all will be irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb. "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."† There, from a reflection of that glory, the righteous themselves shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Eternal glory beams in Immanuel's land. Everlasting light emanates from His blessed face. "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."‡ "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."§

To this blessedness, to this glory, to this honor, to this immortality, "the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come.

* Rev. xxi. 23.

† Isa. lx. 20.

‡ Isa. lx. 19

§ Rev. xxii. 5

And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." O, my friends! be wise in time; choose a glorious Christ now, and you shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

Now, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever let the whole earth be filled with his glory Amen and amen."

" He who on earth as man was known,
And bore our sins and pains.
Now, seated on the eternal throne,
The God of glory reigns.

" His hands the wheels of nature guide
With an unerring skil';
And countless worlds extended wide,
Obey his sov'reign will

" While harps unnumber'd sound his praise,
In yonder world above;
His saints on earth admire his ways,
And glory in his love.

" His righteousness to faith reveal'd,
Wrought out for guilty worms;
Affords a hiding place and shield,
From enemies and storme.

" This land, through which his pilgrims go,
Is desolate and dry;
But streams of grace from him o'erflow
Their thirst to satisfy.

"When troubles, like a burning sun,
Beat heavy on their head,
To this almighty Rock they run,
And find a pleasing shade.

"How glorious he! how happy they
In such a glorious Friend!
Whose love secures them all the way,
And crowns them at the end."

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, **save** Jesus Christ and him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2.

"We preach Christ crucified."—1 Cor. i. 23.

"When on the cross my Lord I see
Bleeding to death for wretched me :
Satan and sin no more can move,
For I am all transform'd to love.

"His thorns and nails pierce through my heart,
In ev'ry groan I bear a part ;
I view his wounds with streaming eyes,
But see ! he bows his head and dies !

"Come, sinners, view the Lamb of God,
Wounded and dead, and bath'd in blood !
Behold his side, and venture near,
The well of endless life is here.

"Here I forget my cares and pains ;
I drink, yet still my thirst remains ;
Only the fountain head above
Can satisfy the thirst of love.

"Oh, that I thus could always feel !
Lord, more and more thy love reveal ;
Then my glad tongue shall loud proclaim
The grace and glory of thy name.

"Thy name dispels my guilt and fear,
Revives my heart, and charms my ear;
Affords a balm for every wound,
And Satan trembles at the sound."

The death of Christ was the most affecting and solemn scene ever presented to the view of men or angels. What a sight! to see Christ on the cross bleeding for sinners! How astonishing! to see the King of glory, whom all the angels of heaven worship and adore, bow his head in death! Earth never before witnessed such a sight. Heaven never before looked upon such a scene. O my soul, draw near and contemplate it. Look towards Calvary with the cross erected in thy view, and behold the Son of God nailed to the accursed tree, his blessed hands, and side and feet pierced, his blood streaming from every pore, until pallid death sits upon his heavenly brow, and he cries, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." This is the scene, the solemn scene, upon which we are about to dwell.

We have been contemplating the glory of Christ; we come now to notice his wonderful death. We have seen him arrayed in the robes of eternal glory; now we see him laying aside these bright robes, humbling himself and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Amazing condescension! that the glorious Son o' God should forsake the realms

of everlasting day, leave the throne of glory, and take up his abode in this dark region of sin and suffering! Boundless love! that He should expire on the cross for a guilty world!

“Oh! love without compare,
 Oh! love beyond degree;
That he, whom cherubim adore,
 Should bleed and die for me!”

Christ became man that he might die for man, that his precious blood might flow for the redemption of a lost world. The land of Judea was the birthplace of the Saviour of the world. It was once the glory of all lands. Jerusalem was its renowned metropolis. Here, God was manifested in the flesh. Here, the Son of God walked with man, clad as a man, in the garb of humanity. How near was heaven to earth when Jesus dwelt among men, promulgating the blessed gospel of the grace of God, to a sinful, dying world! What joyful tidings were conveyed to the shepherds of Bethlehem, when “the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.” “And the angel said unto them, fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Well might the

bright host of heaven burst into that sublime birth-song of Immanuel! "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward man."

Christ came to reconcile a rebel earth to the offended majesty of heaven; to suffer, the just for the unjust; to give his life a ransom for many; to die on Calvary. And when that eventful hour, fixed upon in the counsels of eternity, in which the Son of God should pour out his soul unto death, had arrived, how impressive, how solemn was the scene that transpired on Calvary's sacred mount! How great were the sufferings of God's beloved Son! How painful the death he endured! A series of unparalleled sufferings which he bore in his own person, immediately preceded the crucifixion of our Saviour. In the garden of Gethsemane, in the judgment-hall on the way to Calvary, and after his arrival there, his sufferings were intensely severe. We design to notice these.

The whole life of Christ was a life of sorrow and suffering. He was always "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." From the manger to the cross he trod a thorny pathway. For you, sinner, he lived a suffering life, and for you he died a painful death. Should not the love, the dying love of Christ, constrain you to love him who first loved you, and gave him-

self for you, yes, his own glorious self. Surely it should. Surely your whole heart should be a flame of burning love to your adorable Saviour, "Whom having not seen, ye love."

Christ stood in the room and stead of dying sinners. He was our representative, and as such he endured the penalty of a broken law. He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows. All our iniquities were laid on him. No wonder then, that his holy soul was almost overwhelmed when all the waves and billows of divine wrath were about to gather and break over his devoted head! No wonder that he should cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." What intense sufferings the blessed Jesus endured, when he was about to make his soul an offering for sin! when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree!

Contemplate the scenes and circumstances of the Saviour's suffering and death. Call up in your mind those memorable names consecrated by the passion and death of Christ,—Jerusalem,—Gethsemane,—Calvary. The remembrance of Jerusalem awakens some of the most thrilling associations that ever clustered around the memory. Here, some of the most momentous events in the annals of time, or in the records of eternity, transpired. Here, was displayed the most amazing and glorious scene that was

ever exhibited on this terrestrial globe. Here, on Mount Calvary, the Son of God, the Creator of the Universe, once hung in agonies and death; and here, he accomplished that wonderful, that great and sublime scheme of man's redemption, which is the wonder of angels, which will form the delightful theme of the redeemed in glory, through the countless ages of eternity. What a sacred spot for meditation! But turn to Gethsemane. This is a name deeply engraved on the heart of every Christian. Here Christ suffered as never man suffered; suffered for you, sinners. Here, he endured that bitter agony for you, when "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

Now let us view that mysterious Mount, just without the gates of Jerusalem, on which the Man of sorrows died. Calvary! at the mention of that name, earth thrills with new emotions of joy, and heaven bursts into long, loud anthems of praise. Intense glory beams from the summit of Calvary; but its moral heights no mortal eye can view; its top is lost in the glorious atmosphere of the upper world. In heaven Calvary will awaken many a glorious association, when we there look back and contemplate the wondrous scene it commemorates. There it will live forever in the remembrance of all the

redeemed, and be the eternal source of their highest bliss !

When Christ had spent more than thirty years on earth, the hour—the eventful hour of his departure at length arrived, and with his sufferings full in view, he hastens to Jerusalem to offer himself a sacrifice for our sins. How he longs to reach his ignominious cross—to be baptized with his own blood—to accomplish our salvation on Calvary ! Blessed be God for such a Saviour, whose delights were always with the sons of men !

The following beautiful lines on “the Redeemer hastening to suffer,” are from the pen of Cowper

“The Saviour, what a noble flame
Was kindled in his breast,
When, hasting to Jerusalem,
He marched before the rest!*

“Good-will to men and zeal for God,
His every thought engross;
He longs to be baptized with blood,†
He pants to reach his cross.

“With all his suff’rings full in view,
And woes to us unknown,
Forth to the task his spirit flew,
’Twas love that urged him on.

* Luke xix. 28.

† Luke xii. 50.

"Lord, we return thee what we can!
Our hearts shall sound abroad
Salvation to the dying Man,
And to the rising God!"

"And while thy bleeding glories are
Engage our wondering eyes
We learn our lighter cross to bear,
And hasten to the skies."

Arrived at Jerusalem, for the last time, the Saviour eats the passover with his disciples, and institutes the sacramental supper in that last gloomy night which preceded his painful death. In his dying love he instituted that ordinance which will, through all time commemorate his sufferings and death.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* Who would not obey the injunction, the dying injunction, of the Friend of sinners, "This do in remembrance of me?" Come and manifest your love to the Lord Jesus, at his own table; come, for all things are now ready. "Eat, O friends;

* Matt. xxvi. 26-28.

drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." What tender love did the blessed Jesus manifest to his sorrowful disciples, when he was about to leave them, and bleed and die on Calvary! "Let not your heart be troubled," says he, "ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Consoling words! What animating prospects are here presented to the humble followers of Christ! Our Father's house, the many mansions of glory, our being with Christ, where he is, our future felicity in heaven, are here all held up for our encouragement, while in a suffering world. How solacing, how joyful to the weary Christian, struggling amidst the storms and afflictions of life, to find a happy resting place in our Father's house, in Immanuel's land! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the

power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*

How brightly did the dying love of Jesus shine in that "upper room" at Jerusalem! "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Brighter and brighter will that redeeming love of his eternally shine in the upper room of glory. There all Christ's dear children shall sit down at the banquet of love spread there, from which they shall rise no more; but where they shall forever "eat of that hidden manna," and drink of that living "water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb;" where they will forever enjoy the presence and smiles of a gracious Redeemer.

Having uttered that beautiful prayer, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee," &c., the Saviour calls upon his faithful band, "Arise, let us go hence." "When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden, into which he entered, and his disciples."

The sun had passed the western horizon, and the mantle of darkness was spread over a slumbering world, when that mournful group crossed

* Peter i. 3-5.

the Kedron, and entered the garden of Gethsemane. Thither Jesus had often resorted with his disciples. The spot was well known to them all. But never before had the Saviour come hither with a heart so full of sorrow. Listen to his mournful cry, "My soul," said he, "is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." Your sins, reader, bore him down. The sins of a lost world overwhelmed him, and he "fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

If that bitter cup had passed the Saviour's lips, where would you, where would I have been this day? Without a Saviour, without a heaven, passing our weary days in darkness and despair. Impenetrable gloom would have clouded our bright immortal hopes. But thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift, for the gift of Jesus; for his precious life, for his precious death, which brings salvation to a lost world! The sufferings of our Saviour in the garden of Gethsemane, were all endured for us, guilty sinners. O what piercing agony is that which rends his heart, and forces "great drops of blood" down those pale cheeks moistening the green earth! "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as

it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* After rising from the earth he had moistened with his blood, Christ is apprehended and betrayed into the hands of sinners. The sword of divine justice is now fairly unsheathed. God the Father is now commissioning the sword of his justice to awake against his own dear Son, who is now delivered for our offences.

"Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

The innocent sufferer of Gethsemane, who is none other than the Creator of worlds, and the Author of our being, is hurried away to the judgment hall of an earthly court, there to be derided and condemned to death by sinful mortals. There the blessed Redeemer gave "his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair;" there he "hid not his face from shame and spitting."† There the glorious Son of God "was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," wounded and bruised till his heavenly "visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."‡ What condescen-

* Luke xxii. 44.

† Is. l. 6.

‡ Is. lii. 14.

sion and love are here displayed! Wonder O heavens! Be astonished O earth! Behold that bleeding victim, wearing a thorny crown, see his life's blood streaming from every lacerated vein, and read in that bleeding heart the vastness of redeeming love. He who now wears that crown of thorns for sinners once wore a crown of glory at God's right hand.

What manner of love was that which led Christ to make such an exchange as this—a crown of glory for a crown of thorns! It was the love, the infinite love he ever bore to dying sinners. Nothing brought him from his throne of glory to his cross of suffering but eternal, redeeming love. Look at the bleeding Jesus again and again till your hearts overflow with love to him. Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold the man!" We would say to you in the language of a greater and better than Pilate, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" Behold Him as your Saviour, bleeding for your sins. Behold Him till the eye of faith brightens, and you exclaim with Thomas, "My Lord (yes my bleeding Lord) and my God." In that judgment hall the Lord of glory is condemned to death. There "he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,

and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

But let us follow Him to the cross. That last dreadful night of the Son of God had passed. Morning had broke as clear and beautiful as ever. The sun had risen in his strength, and his glorious midday beams were now gladdening the oriental landscape; all nature was smiling around, when Christ, bearing his cross, thronged by an immense crowd of bitter enemies and wondering spectators, is led away to be crucified.

Leaving the gates of the crowded city, that train is seen ascending the slope of Mount Calvary. What, views, what scenes are now presented to the astonished gaze. There stands Jerusalem in all its glory; Mount Zion with its countless edifices, palaces, and towers of strength; Mount Moriah with its magnificent temple, whose glorious form dazzles the eye of the beholder as the sunbeams fall upon it; and a little before you, arises a mysterious Mount, on whose summit the cross of Christ is to be erected.

But there was a far more interesting and glorious sight than was ever before exhibited on earth, passing before you. All heaven was gazing with profound interest upon it. There was the Son of God, the glorious Redeemer of a lost world, going to ransom his people with his

own blood,—to pay the last farthing that God's holy law demanded,—to make an end of sin,—to bring in an everlasting righteousness,—to vanquish Satan and all his legions,—to triumph over death itself, and the gloomy grave. There was the Captain of our salvation going to open the portals of heaven and lead millions of Adam's sons to glory. There was One whose arm had made the heaven of heavens going to be nailed to a cross. “And he bearing his cross went forth into a place, called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.”*

What a scene is now transpiring on Calvary! Thousands are gazing on the Son of God weltering in his own blood. Well might angels leave their thrones to look upon such a scene. Well might mortals be amazed at such love as shines around that cross, and dazzled with that glory which beams from Calvary. The holy, the innocent Jesus is nailed to the cross for sinners. But as his murderers are, with heavy blows, driving the nails into his blessed hands and feet, those pale, quivering lips mutter strange words, which partake more of the language of a

* John xix, 17, 18.

God than a man; which breathe nothing but pardoning love. It is the dying prayer of Jesus for his murderers, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do."

Blessed Jesus! thou art compassion itself. O speak these words to every reader. Say to him —to her, "Son, daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee." "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" That prayer was soon answered. Many who had vociferated "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," were soon afterwards crying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" They were indeed forgiven and accepted by him whom they had crucified.

Almighty Saviour! thy power is the same now; break each heart of stone. Thy grace is the same now; pour it forth on guilty sinners. Then will they look to thee whom they have pierced, and mourn!

"' Father, forgive, (the Saviour said,)
They know not what they do.'
His heart was moved, when thus he pray'd
For me, my friends, and you.

He saw that as the Jews abus'd
And crucified his flesh;
So he, by us, would be refus'd,
And crucified afresh.

“Through love of sin, we long were prone
To act as Satan bid ;
But now with grief and shame we own,
We knew not what we did.

“We knew not the desert of sin,
Nor whom we thus defied ;
Nor where our guilty souls had been,
If Jesus had not died ?

“We knew not what a law we broke,
How holy, just and pure !
Nor what a God we durst provoke,
But thought ourselves secure.

“But Jesus all our guilt foresaw,
And shed his precious blood
To satisfy the holy law,
And make our peace with God.

“My sin, dear Saviour, made thee bleed,
Yet didst thou pray for me !
I knew not what I did, indeed,
When ignorant of thee.”

For three long hours did the Saviour hang, bleeding on the cross, enduring indescribable agonies. Oh ! was there ever sorrow like that which a dying Saviour felt ! Well might the suffering Jesus exclaim, “Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.” One wave after another broke over the Saviour’s

soul, till the last, heaviest of all, came rolling on to overwhelm him. His Father—his own Father, had deserted him; and from that bloody cross arose a most piercing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Amidst this dreadful suffering, nature seems to sympathize with her bleeding Author. She gives a groan that makes the earth tremble, and turns the heavens into blackness. How awful the period! Darkness covers the land; the sun is darkened; the earth quakes; the rocks are rent; the veil of the temple is rent in twain; the graves are opened, and sleeping saints arise. "Now, from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of the grave after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."* Well may the sun turn black in the heavens; well may the earth quake, and the rocks rend, when that divine Personage is in the arms of death; and well may a heathen centurion exclaim at such a sight, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Amidst this awful

* Matt. xxvii. 45, 51, 58.

convulsion of nature, are heard the dying words of the Man of Calvary. In tremulous tones they fall on the ears of the amazed spectators; but the human ear was never before greeted with such joyful sounds—with such glorious tidings.

That bleeding Sufferer never bowed his head in death, until he had conquered every foe and exclaimed with his departing breath, in the language of triumph, “It is finished.” “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”* “It is finished!” At the mention of these words the universe thrills with joy. Glad tidings! let them ring from pole to pole—let them be loudly proclaimed from every pulpit,—published from every press; let every Christian blaze them abroad; let every missionary fly with them to heathen lands; let all the ends of the earth hear the joyful sound, “It is finished!”

When Christ died, the redemption of a lost world was finished. The gates of the New Jerusalem above were then opened to admit the redeemed sinner. Heaven was then at peace with earth. God could then look in compassion and love on a rebel world—could then encircle

* John xix. 30.

in his gracious arms the vilest of Adam's apostate race.

When Christ had commended his spirit into the hands of his Father, the solemn scene on Calvary soon closed. The astonished multitude began to leave the sacred spot, and march towards a noisy city. "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned."* But reader, follow not a thoughtless world. Stay on Calvary. There view the bleeding glories of Immanuel. There taste the sweetness of redeeming love. There contemplate a glorious, finished salvation. O my soul, look to that precious bleeding Saviour; trust him for his grace; praise him for his love, and adore him for that grand atonement which he made on Calvary!

'Let me dwell on Golgotha,
Weep and love my life away;
While I see him on the tree
Weep, and bleed, and die for me!'

That dear blood for sinners spilt,
Shows my sin in all its guilt;
Ah, my soul, he bore the load,
Thou hast slain the Lamb of God.

* Luke xxiii. 48.

' Hark ! his dying word, 'Forgive
Father, let the sinner live ;
Sinner, wipe the tears away,
I thy ransom freely pay.'

While I hear this grace reveal'd,
And obtain a pardon seal'd ;
All my soft affections move,
Waken'd by the force of love.

Farewell, world, thy gold is dross,
Now I see the bleeding cross ;
Jesus died to set me free
From the law, and sin and thee !

" He has dearly bought my soul,
Lord, accept and claim the whole !
To thy will I all resign,
Now, no more my own, but thine "

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED—CONTINUED.

"Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified."—GAL. iii. 1.

"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."—1 COR. v. 7.

READER, before your eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth crucified. You have followed him to Gethsemane; from Gethsemane to the judgment hall; from the judgment hall to Calvary. You have seen him extended on the cross, bathed in blood. You have heard his dying groans, and seen him bow his head and expire. Before your intellectual vision Calvary's mournful scene has been arrayed.

Now let us inquire into the cause of the sufferings and death of Christ. Why does the Lord of life and glory thus suffer? Why does he endure that piercing agony and that bloody sweat in gloomy Gethsemane? Why is he condemned to the death of Calvary? Look at the crucified Jesus. Why does he hang on that bloody cross? Why are those blessed hands and feet nailed to the accursed tree? Why is

that dear side pierced with the soldier's spear? Why does the immaculate Lamb of God thus bleed? Ah! sinner, it is for you. For you Christ endured that indescribable agony in Gethsemane, and those excruciating pains on Calvary. For you, the blood trickles down those pale cheeks, and streams from that pierced side. For you, the Son of God endures the hidings of his Father's face, till he is led to exclaim in the bitterness of his soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and for you his last breath is drawn, and his last cry uttered, "It is finished." O could you but see with faith's vision, what Christ has done for you, surely your whole heart would burn with love to such a Saviour, who, to ransom your precious soul from eternal woe, shed his own blood! That precious blood was not shed in vain; it was poured out to cleanse you from the guilt of sin. It streamed down that cross to wash away the moral stains of a polluted world. Not all the blood that flowed from the Jewish altars could do this. But that vicarious sacrifice offered on Calvary, expiates the greatest guilt. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. The meritorious obedience, sufferings, and death of the incarnate Son of God, afford an ample satisfaction for sin. God's holy, but violated law requires nothing more. Now, there is no-

thing to condemn believers in Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

In the 8th chapter of Romans—a chapter that ought to be written in golden letters—the Apostle boldly exclaims, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? "It is Christ that died." This is the only plea that a guilty sinner can make before a just God. "It is Christ that died." Precious truth!

Blessed Jesus! it is from thy death that we derive our life, our immortal life. It is from thy bleeding side that we drink of the living waters of life, that we draw our purest joys and our highest felicities. We thank thee, Almighty Saviour, for thy precious death, which confers such unspeakable blessings on sinners.

Christ died that we might live. He died for us. The decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem was for our sins, "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."* "He was manifested to take away our sins."† "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were

* 1 Cor. xv. 3.

† 1 John iii. 5.

healed."* "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."† Sin, then, was the procuring cause of the sufferings and death of God's dear Son. Ah! sinner, you have slain the innocent Lamb of God. You have caused those wounds on Immanuel's glorious person. Your sins pierced him to the very heart. Will you not then look on Him whom you have pierced, and mourn? O look and live, for in that *look* there is life. Look to Him who is lifted up on the cross for you. Have you looked to Christ for salvation? Looking to Christ is nothing more than believing on his glorious name. Have you faith in Him, in his atoning blood? Saving faith in a crucified Christ is all that is required to fit the vilest sinner for glory. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."‡ We entreat you again to look to a dying Saviour. Let your eyes turn to that bloody tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; for the healing of your soul. Listen to the Saviour's own gracious call. Hark! from the top of Calvary, I hear the blessed invitation fall from the lips of the dying Man, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." From

* Pet. ii. 24.

† 1 Pet. iii. 18.

‡ Acts xvi. 31.

heaven's high throne I hear it still proclaimed by the glorious Redeemer, "Look unto me and be ye saved." It is the voice of Immanuel calling sinners home to glory. It is the voice of God speaking in the tenderest accents of redeeming love.

"The God who once to Israel spoke
From Sinai's top, in fire and smoke,
In gentler strains of gospel grace,
Invites us now to seek his face.

'He wears no terrors on his brow,
He speaks in love, from Zion, now,
It is the voice of Jesus' blood,
Calling poor wand'rers home to God.

"The holy Moses quak'd and fear'd
When Sinai's thundering law he heard ;
But reigning grace, with accent mild,
Speaks to the sinner as a child.

"Hark ! how from Calvary it sounds ;
From the Redeemer's bleeding wounds ;
' Pardon and grace I freely give,
Poor sinner, look to me and live.'

What other arguments can move
The heart that slight a Saviour's love !
Yet till Almighty power constrain,
This matchless love is preach'd in vain.

"O Saviour, let thy power be felt,
And cause each stony heart to melt !
Deeply impress upon our youth,
The light and force of gospel truth."

When Christ was crucified the veil of the temple was rent in twain, thus showing that the way into the holiest of all—even into heaven was now opened by the blood that flowed from Immanuel's veins. No more sacrifices were required. The great Antitype—the bleeding Lamb of God had been offered. Sinner, heaven is now opened to receive you. Vile as you are, you will be accepted if you only look to a crucified Jesus—if you only trust in him for your whole salvation. O will you not embrace that Saviour, who will lead you to glory? Are not the joys of a blissful eternity worth striving for?

Then “give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”* Seek an interest in Christ now. Then all the glories of heaven will be yours. If a crucified Christ is yours, blessings innumerable will flow around your path to immortality, and through the merits of Immanuel you will at length gain the happy shores of a blessed world, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. Glorious rest! Who would not strive to obtain it? Christ en-

* 2 Peter i. 10 11.

dured the painful death of the cross to purchase this rest for his people. Christ died, a sacrifice for their sins, thus paving the way for their eternal salvation. He died, a sacrifice for the sins of a lost world. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."* He was crucified for a "multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

Sinner, repair to the foot of the cross, and roll your burden of guilt on its bleeding victim—the Lord Jesus. There your burden will become light; and there is room for you also to stand and receive the balm which drops from the top of that bloody tree for the healing of a diseased world. Though you may be the chief of sinners, yet you are invited to come to that cross. He who once, in his infinite love for you, bled on it, himself calls you. "Come unto me," says the Saviour, in language as compassionate as ever flowed from human lips. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."† Go, heavy-laden sinners, and find rest in Christ. Enter into rest now by believing in him. Remember that your iniquities were laid on the head of a bleeding Saviour. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "He was wounded for our

* Hebrews ix. 28.

† Matt., xi. 28.

transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."* "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."† His death is our life; his dear wounds and bleeding side, our soundness and health. Now God is pacified, and the sinner saved by the death of Jesus.

To those who are looking to a crucified Redeemer, and relying entirely on the merits of his blood for life and salvation, the sweet language of a reconciled God now is, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."‡ Blessed consolation! This is the language of our gracious Heavenly Father, and oh! how reviving is it to the poor penitent sinner, who is often oppressed with a sense of guilt and borne down with the apprehension of impending wrath. He is now enabled to shout with the adoring prophet in that sweet song, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is

* Is. liii. 5.

† 1 Cor. v. 7.

‡ Christ's dying for us is as much in God's account as if we had twice over borne the eternal agonies of hell.—MCCHEYNE.

turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."* You may well trust a crucified Redeemer with your soul and its immortal concern, for he has, by his obedience and death, effected a complete salvation for you. He breathed out his precious life for you; but he rose again for your justification. He "was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."† "I lay down my life," says Christ, "for the sheep." And again, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."‡

Christ was indeed laid in the cold and silent tomb; but God did not suffer his Holy One to see corruption. The sepulchre could not hold Him. He triumphed over the grave. He burst the fetters of death, and in a glorious form, ascended to heaven. There he ever lives to intercede for sinners; there he stands with open arms to receive the vilest of the vile. "Where-

* Is. xii. 1 2.

† Rom. iv. 25.

‡ John x. 15-17, 18.

fore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

Christ is not only able, but willing to save sinners; yea, he rejoices in their salvation. He delights to pluck them as brands from the burning,—to make them monuments of his victorious grace,—trophies of his redeeming love,—pillars in his glorious temple above, where they shall sing the song of redemption through all eternity. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."† He "for the joy that was set before him (the joy of saving sinners,) endured the cross, despising the shame, and is (now) set down at the right hand of the throne of God."‡ A crucified Redeemer is still carrying on his blessed work of saving sinners. His salvation is to the uttermost; none need despair.

Come to Christ, and salvation is yours. Before closing this chapter, we would just glance at the amazing love exhibited in the death of Christ. Would you see the highest manifestation of eternal love? Then contemplate Christ crucified. Here is a grand exhibition of infinite love. In the crucifixion of the glorious Redeemer, the brightest love that ever shone on

* Heb. vii. 25.

† Is. liii. 11.

‡ Heb. xii. 2.

earth is displayed. What boundless love is seen here! The infinite love of Christ, shining in all its glory! What but infinite love brought him from the height of bliss, to the depths of sufferings, from the throne of heaven to the cross of Calvary! What but infinite love made him a suffering man and a dying Saviour! What but infinite love made him hasten to Jerusalem, to suffer for sinners! What but infinite love led him to Gethsemane, to endure those agonies for sinners, where his blessed form was covered with bloody sweat! What but infinite love nailed him to the cross, there to bleed and die for sinners! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."* But oh! the greatest wonder in the universe is, that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Think of this, wonder at it, be amazed at it! Christ, the glorious Son of God, dying for you a vile sinner, a rebel worm! O admire that love which pitied you in your lost condition, visited your habitation, and raised you from the depths of sin and suffering, to become an heir of eternal life, and of eternal glory. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a

* John xv. 13.

good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."* How vast is this love! Surpassing love of a dying Saviour! thy breadths and lengths have never been compassed by a human thought; thy depths never fathomed by a created intelligence; thy heights never scanned by a seraph's gaze.

Dear believer, may you, the object of divine love, be strengthened with might by the spirit of God in the inner man, and be "able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height" of this stupendous love, "a length which reaches from everlasting to everlasting; a breadth that encompasses every intelligence and every interest; a depth which reaches the lowest state of human degradation and misery; and a height that throws floods of glory on the throne and crown of Jehovah!"

What a theme! the dying love of the crucified Son of God! Well may angels desire to dwell on this mystery! Well may saints be enraptured with this profound subject! What heart is so obdurate as not to be melted by its touching exhibition, or so benighted as not to be dazzled by its glory! How wonderful! that he

* 1 Rom. v. 6, 8.

who kindled up the stars of heaven, should take upon him our nature, and die in our room and stead! Amazing love! This is the wonder of wonders, the unsearchable riches of Christ:

“Not to be thought of, but with tides of joy;
Not to be mentioned, but with shouts of praise.”

Truly, the love of Christ passeth knowledge.* Those, and those alone, who have stood by the cross and viewed Immanuel in agonies and death, bleeding and dying for their sins; and have felt that healing balm applied to their diseased souls; have seen all their sins washed away with the blood of God, their ransom paid, and their pardon sealed, will realize the following very appropriate and beautiful lines:

“In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear;
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopp'd my wild career.

“I saw one hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
Who fix'd his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.

* In the first Part of this work, entitled “Thoughts on the love of Christ as manifested to a Lost World,” we have endeavored to throw out some hints on this delightful theme. To this we respectfully refer the reader.

Sure, never to my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seem'd to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.

"My conscience felt, and own'd the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And help'd to nail him there.

"Alas! I knew not what I did,
But now my tears are vain;
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?
For I the Lord have slain.

"A second look he gave, which said,
'I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid;
I'll die, that thou may'st live.'

"Thus, while his death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue;
(Such is the mystery of grace)
It seals my pardon too.

With pleasing grief and mournful joy,
My spirit now is filled;
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live by him I kill'd."

CHAPTER VI.

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST.

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—
EPH. i. 7.

"Redemption! what a glorious plan;
How suited to our need!
The grace that raises fallen man,
Is wonderful indeed!"

"'Twas wisdom form'd the vast design,
To ransom us when lost:
And love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost."

"Strict Justice, with approving look,
The holy cov'nant sealed;
And Truth and power undertook
The whole should be fulfill'd."

"Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Pow'r and Love,
In all their glory shone;
When Jesus left the courts above,
And died to save his own."

In the works of creation, the power, wisdom and goodness of God are admirably displayed; but in the far greater and more glorious work of human redemption, his love shines in full

resplendency. How glorious was the design of God to redeem a lost world! How magnificent the plan of eternal redemption! This redemption originated in the infinite love of God the Father. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* Jesus Christ is the gift of the Father—a precious gift, indeed, to a lost world. He is given to redeem his people; given that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. Jesus Christ is therefore called the unspeakable gift of God. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."† In the counsels of eternity, Christ was chosen to be the Redeemer of his people. God gave him as a free gift to the Church. A greater gift he could not bestow upon lost sinners. Had the Almighty given us ten thousand worlds to possess, they would have been as nothing in comparison with Jesus Christ, his unspeakable gift. Oh! how good our God is. How great is his power, wisdom and goodness, as manifested in the creation of the universe; but oh! how amazing is his love, as exhibited in the redemption of a captivated world,—in sending his only begotten Son to die for sinners!

* John iii. 16.

† 2 Cor. ix. 15

"Thou everlasting lover
Of our unworthy race!
Thy gracious eye survey'd us
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom thou hast made us,
And died for us in love."

The gift of a Saviour, and redemption through his blood, afford the grandest prospect of the eternal love of God. Around this sacred theme, beam glorious rays of divine love. "God is love;" and redemption is but the effect of that love, in which the Deity is enshrined. Love enters into the very essence of the Divinity; and we see that it has blazed forth from the eternal throne, and shone on our benighted world. Yes, the glorious light has shone from heaven. It shines all around us. God loves this world. Blessed truth! Every page of divine revelation gleams with his love. Redemption is full of it. Here contemplate it. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

Jesus Christ willingly undertook our re-

* 1 John iv. 9, 10.

demption. He cheerfully offered himself to bear our sins, to bleed on the altar of divine wrath, to redeem us from eternal misery. O blessed Saviour! thy love never had a beginning; it is like thyself, eternal. Love always glowed in thy blessed bosom for a sinful world. All the glories of Paradise could not keep thee from leaving thy throne to ransom a guilty race. When there were no merciful arms to embrace us; no joyful heaven to welcome us; yea, when we were lost sinners, thou, blessed Jesus, didst pity us, and hasten on the wings of thy love to redeem us, to bring us to glory, to seat us around thy throne, in the celestial palace. How wonderful is thy love, thou Friend of Sinners! When that momentous question was asked by the Almighty in the counsels of eternity, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Our blessed Saviour came forward and said, "Here am I; send me."

Christ was delighted with the glorious work of redeeming a lost world. When the morning stars sang together, and all the immortal sons of God shouted for joy over a rising world, the Saviour rejoiced over its redemption. Then his "delights were with the sons of men." Redemption was his chosen work, and in its execution he took the greatest delight. Ages rolled away, and earth groaned beneath the burden of its

sin; idolatry and superstition reigned in triumph over a vast empire; moral darkness, obscuring the light of eternal day, enshrouded the human race, till the star of Bethlehem pointed to the infant Jesus as the glorious Redeemer of his people. A new light then burst from heaven upon them. Christ, "the bright and morning star," that issues in the light of a blissful eternity, appeared in a human form, and trod the vale of humanity. He willingly, yea, joyfully, left his throne of glory to bring redemption to us. His language was, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."* Our lost, pitiful condition called for a Redeemer. When Christ came to redeem us, we were on the verge of everlasting destruction.

Man, created in the image of his Maker, was once holy and happy. But sin soon entered our fair world, and spread ruin and devastation all around. Pain was felt; disease and suffering endured, and death embraced in his chilly arms a fallen world. Sin brought death into this world and all our misery. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have

* Psalm xl. 7, 8.

sinned."* How deplorable was the condition of the human race! An awful eternity of suffering opened to their view. Then God in infinite love said, "Deliver from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him."

Jesus Christ was set apart for the great work of redemption; and at the appointed time, God sent him to redeem us from the curse of a broken law, and to guide us safely through the mazes of a bewildering scene to the Paradise above. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."† To redeem lost sinners was the very object for which the Son of God was sent into the world; for which he was made of a woman; for which he was made under the law. O matchless grace! O sovereign love! that God sent his Son; his only Son, to save sinners.

Here we behold a way of access opened to perishing sinners through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Blessed Lord! may the knowledge of this unspeakably precious redemption through a crucified Redeemer, fill my soul

* Rom. v. 12.

† Gal. iv. 4, 5

with gratitude and praise. "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever." Let us see how the redemption of sinners was effected. We find that an immense sum was paid for their ransom; that it required the blood of God to redeem a world of perishing sinners. "Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."*

It is expressly declared that "without shedding of blood is no remission."† The blood of the Deity must flow or else a world be irrecoverably lost. But the Son of God assumed human nature, and freely poured out his blood for our redemption. Oh! the boundless love of Christ, that he should shed his precious blood for sinners. Oh! the infinite efficacy of that blood to cleanse from all sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed us from all sin."‡ We see then that our redemption is by price. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."§ What a price was paid for our redemption! the precious blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God! "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious

* Acts xx. 28.

‡ 1 John .7.

† Heb. ix. 22.

§ 1 Cor. vi. 20.

blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*

Costly price of man’s redemption; the infinitely precious blood of Christ! O my soul, look with wonder and amazement at thy ransom! the precious life and the precious blood of Jesus, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”† “The Son of Man came, to give his life a ransom for many.”‡ It is a blessed consolation for the sinner to know that he has redemption through the blood of Christ,—that he has access to a holy God through a crucified Jesus. How sweet are those words, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”

The blood of Christ is the fountain-head of all felicity. It is the blessed source whence emanates the living water of life; whence flow pardon and peace to a guilty world. It is that “river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.” Thirsty soul, come and quench your thirst at the fountain of life. Dear believer, come and draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation. Long before a bleeding Saviour hung on the

* 1 Peter i. 18, 19.

† Titus ii. 14.

‡ Matt. xx. 28.

cross, it was prophesied, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The fountain has been opened. The rock has been smitten. Christ's side has been pierced. The sacred streams have gushed from the cross—have flowed around Calvary. When our Saviour instituted the sacramental supper he said, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins; drink ye all of it." This, this is the fountain of joy—the well of endless life. Here, sinners may drink and never thirst again. And all are invited to come to the waters. The gospel invitation extends to all classes of mankind without exception; to the vile as well as to the good; to the poor as well as to the rich; to the young as well as to the old. The blessed call stands emblazoned on the page of inspiration. With the authority of the Majesty of heaven, I repeat it to a thirsting and famishing world, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good and let your soul delight itself

in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."* "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."† Blessed be God for that "whosoever." None are forbidden to taste "the water of life." The vilest sinner may come to the "waters" and drink, and live forever. None are excluded from the way of salvation through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. What encouragement is there for all to come to the bleeding side of Immanuel, there to receive the pardon of sin, obtain eternal life, and imbibe immortal joys! Here is redemption offered to you. Will you receive it?

Here is the bread and water of life. Will you eat that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness? Will you drink at the fountain of immortality? "Whoso eateth my flesh," says Christ, "and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him!" Oh! who would not come and be made a partaker of such inestimable blessings as cluster around the cross of a loving Redeemer.

* Is. li, 1, 3.

† Rev. xxii, 17.

Here is all that a dying sinner requires for his redemption. Here is all that a feeble saint needs for his comfort and support during his pilgrimage through a bleak and barren world which is far from his home. What joys are to be found in redemption by Christ! They are unspeakable and full of glory. They flow down the narrow stream of time and dilate in the boundless ocean of eternity.

Redemption by Christ affords sweet peace to the soul. The blood of Jesus poured out from the cross makes peace between God and the sinner. "Having made peace through the blood of his cross."* It brings us nigh to God. "Now in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."† Precious blood, that brings us so near our heavenly Father! This is "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."‡ This is the blood of "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." This blood satisfies offended justice, redeems the sinner and prepares him for glory. The blood of Jesus atones for all sin. There is redemption for all sinners, then, if they will but apply to the atoning blood of Jesus for cleansing. There is justification to

* Col. i. 20.

† Eph. ii. 13.

‡ Heb. xii. 24.

acquit all; there is righteousness to clothe all. "Surely," shall one say, "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."* The sinner rejoices to find in the Lord Jesus, complete redemption. "Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

"Blessed Saviour, speak a word,
Bid all my sorrows cease;
Be thou my great atoning Lord,
My Righteousness and Peace.

"Oh, let thy precious blood divine,
Wash all my sins away!
Then shall my soul resplendent shine,
Through heaven's eternal day."

How merciful is our God! How free is his grace! How plentiful is that redemption which is in Christ Jesus! "Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of

* Is. xlvi 24, 25.

sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." O sinner, come and taste the joys of redemption. Exercise a lively faith in the atoning blood of the Son of God. We would lead you to the bleeding sacrifice; we would point you to the cross of Christ as your only redemption. We would tell you in the tenderest language that there is redemption for you. Christ is made unto us "redemption." Cleaving to him you shall be redeemed from all evil, and finally admitted into the Paradise of God. Our blessed Saviour has obtained eternal redemption for us, and he will soon lead us to glory.

This is the grand object of Christ's sufferings and death, or in other words, of his redemption, to bring "many sons unto glory." Redemption by Christ, then, is an eternal deliverance from sin and sufferings, and the permanent enjoyment of the highest bliss in heaven. All the happiness of the redeemed in glory results from redemption by Christ. All the future felicity of the whole household of faith, through eternity, will flow from that redemption completed on Calvary. "He sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant forever; holy and reverend is his name." By shedding his own blood the Redeemer has purchased everlasting salvation for his people. "Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a

greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* Here we may see the eternal, matchless love of Christ, in shedding his precious blood for our redemption. Love was the impelling motive that led him to undertake our redemption; and love enabled him to exclaim, "It is finished." Love made him offer himself a sacrifice for our sins. "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour†."

Christ calls the church "his love." "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!"‡ He loved the church so ardently as to redeem it with his own blood. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."§

Christ's love to the church is eternal. He says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;

* Heb ix. 11, 12.

† Cant vii. 6.

‡ Eph. v. 2.

§ Eph. v. 25, 27.

therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."* And again, "Since thou wast precious in my sight thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee." Paul thus celebrates the redeeming love of Christ to his church, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich."†

* Jer. xxxi. 3

† 2 Cor. viii. 9.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW SONG IN GLORY.

"And they sung a new song."—REV. v. 9.

THE redeeming love of Christ will be celebrated through eternity. In heaven, redemption by Christ will be the grand theme, the sweet song of the family of God. It is that "New Song" which all the redeemed sing in glory. It will have no dying cadence through the revolving ages of a blessed eternity. It will be always new; yes, when ages countless as the drops of the ocean, shall have rolled away, the song of redemption will be as new to the redeemed as when the celestial mansions first echoed with its pealing strains.

In the house of his pilgrimage, redemption was the believer's song, and in that house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, it will be his sweet song through countless ages. O blessed thought! who will not now commence the "New Song" of Redemption! Will you not chant songs to Him who died to ransom you from eternal woe! The songs of the grateful

followers of the Lamb never end. The saints will find eternal employment in praising Christ for that precious redemption he has effected by his death. The notes of praise to a crucified Redeemer sound through the narrow limits of time and the rolling ages of eternity. In heaven, Christ will be eternally admired as the Lamb that was slain for the redemption of sinners. There he stands in the "midst of the throne" as the Lamb of God that was once wounded, and bruised, and slain.

"And I beheld," says John, "and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."* Every eye shall see him there. Every tongue shall praise him there. All the redeemed shall shout, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." This will be the burden of the "New Song." This will sound the loudest through heaven. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."† There will be none brought to heaven but those who will sing eternal praises to the Lamb for the wonders of redemption.

* Rev. v. 6.

† NOTE—There will be much in Jesus to admire when we shall see him as he is. But that which will draw out the loudest notes of the new song will be the sight of the prints of the nails, and of the wound in his side. "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."—McHEYNE.

There will be no mute tongue in glory. All voices and all hearts shall unite in singing the New Song. When the portals of heaven were opened to the beloved John, and the glory of the New Jerusalem came beaming through those pearly gates, he heard the music of Zion; and what was it but the New Song of redemption? "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."*

We find that a mighty multitude will be congregated in glory to sing the song of redemption; some from "every kindred, and tongue, and people." "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."† What a glorious company will that be who shall eternally stand on the celestial Mount Zion! How sweet will be

* Rev. v. 9 10

† Rev. vii. 9, 10.

their song! How rapturous their delight! How ecstatic their joy! But reader, pause, and ask, "Am I to mingle among that blessed host who never cease to praise God and the Lamb?" "Is the new song of redemption to be my sweet song above?"

Live for eternity—live for Christ now, and you will soon join all the redeemed family of God, in songs that will never end. With your robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, you shall be presented faultless before the throne of God, to praise Him who loved you and washed you from your sins in his own blood. Then will you see your glorious Redeemer, who will always be to you the centre of heavenly attraction. How will your grateful heart burn with seraphic love to Him whose blood brought you such heavenly bliss, and whose merits crowned you with such inconceivable glory! Your hearts will overflow with more joy than language can express. You will then, in the light of heaven, see that redemption by Christ is a precious work—that rich, inestimable blessings flow from the atoning blood. Be sure not to trample that blood underfoot now. You will never be crowned with glory without your robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb. You must become interested in the death of Christ, before you can learn that "new

song," which none but the redeemed sing. "And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."* "And they sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb."†

On the sublime vision of heavenly worship as vouchsafed to John when banished to the lonely Patmos, a writer‡ whom we admire has the following lofty expressions: "The singers were those hundred and forty-four thousand, and they sung a new song, and as they struck their harps, together thus they sung: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' And with one voice the innumerable host chanted the heavenly doxology, 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb forever; and back returned the long 'Amen.' Again and again was it taken

* Rev. xiv. 3.

† Rev. xv. 3.

‡ Rev. J. T. Headley, a beautiful writer, author of the "Sacred Mountains," a splendid production, without which no library can be considered complete. Mr. Headley is the author of many other valuable works well known to the public.

up and echoed from rank to rank along that celestial mountain, till it came rolling back with all the strength of archangel voices full on the throne of God. The theme, the song was new—it was the song of Redemption. David stood there sweeping a harp far more melodious and tuneful than the one he swept with such a master hand on earth. Elijah poured his soul of fire into it. Isaiah gave it a loftier echo. The martyrs, those witnesses for the truth who had passed through the flames to their reward, furnished new accessions to its strength; for all the ransomed of the Lord were there. Aaron went up thither from the top of Hor, and Moses from Pisgah. Elijah's chariot of fire never stopped till its burning wheels rested on that heavenly mount, and thither Christ ascended from the hill of Olives. Thus the redeemed have flocked one after another to the Mount of God, and there they shall continue together until the glorious assembly stands complete, and 'God is all and in all.' How will the arches of heaven resound with that "new song" when all the redeemed are gathered home by the blood of Christ!

"And what in yonder realms above,
Is ransom'd man ordain'd to be?
With honor, holiness and love,
No seraph more a lorn'd than I e.

"Nearest the throne, and first in song,
Man shall his hallelujahs raise;
While wond'ring angels round him throng,
And swell the chorus of his praise."

How many redeemed sinners are now before the throne, singing everlasting songs to Him who died for them on Calvary! The redeemed are fast flocking to their everlasting home in glory. All the ransomed of the Lord shall soon "return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Prophets and apostles and martyrs, the great and good of every age and nation, are already in Zion above, and redemption is their song. Those immortal divines, Baxter, Bunyan, Flavel, Owen, Henry, Doddridge, Watts, Edwards, Payson, Martyn, Chalmers, the lovely McCheyne, the venerable Alexander,* have ascended to swell the throne, in singing "Worthy is the Lamb." This song breathes on every lip in glory, and bursts from every heart there. One

* This distinguished servant of the Lord Jesus, who lately went to glory, was one of the most faithful and devoted ministers of the gospel the world has ever witnessed. His memory will be embalmed in the hearts of thousands, while the world lasts; and his works will be preserved as a precious legacy to the Church.

song employs all the tongues of the redeemed in the mansions of bliss.

"Ten thousand, thousand are their tongues,
But all their songs are one."

Dear follower of the Lamb, we shall all shortly join with the family of God in this "new song," in mansions of Glory. Then, lift up your head with joy; "for your redemption draweth nigh." The hour of glory will soon be at hand.

"Oh, glorious hour, it comes with speed!
When we, from sin and darkness freed,
Shall see the God who died for man,
And praise him more than angels can."

Life is fast hastening away. Time is swiftly flying. Eternity is at the door. You are just on the threshold of glory—just within sight of Paradise. The gates of the celestial city are about to open for your reception, and your Saviour is ready to pronounce that blessed invitation, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Does not a sight of all this glory make you long to obtain it? Then press onward; press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. One step more, and

glory will beam upon your eye, and the joys of heaven captivate your heart, and the music of Paradise charm your ear. The hour will soon come when the shining mansions shall receive you, when an exceeding and eternal weight of glory shall crown you; when you shall begin that "new song" which you learned on earth; when redemption by Christ shall be your unending theme. Oh! this is heaven, where all rest in the bosom of God; where all behold the Redeemer's face; where all are singing that wondrous "new song" which fills heaven with joy, and eternity with undying melody, as it ascends in pealing notes from the mansions of glory, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

You will soon begin your everlasting song in the upper sanctuary. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

"Oh, holy, holy Lord!
Whom angel hosts adore;
When shall I join in raptured strains,
The bright celestial choir?"

"In pity view a sinful worm,
A pris'ner here below;
A pilgrim journeying through the land
O darkness, sin and woe.

"Ten thousand voices round thy throne
Unite in hymns divine;
'Salvation to the Lamb!' they cry,
As high in bliss they shine.

"Fain would I now begin the song,
To thee my God and friend;
Then mingle with the choirs above,
In prais which ne'er shall end."

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED, THE SUM AND SUBSTANCE
OF THE GOSPEL.

"Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum."—HEB. viii. 1.

THE gospel is glad tidings of great joy to a lost world. It brings immortality within the reach of dying sinners. It opens untold glories to them. It brings life and immortality to light. Dispelling the moral darkness of a fallen world, it points to an eternal day of light and glory. Delivering from eternal misery the condemned sinner, it reveals to him the way of salvation; leads him in the path of righteousness, and finally brings him to the enjoyment of endless felicity in the heavenly world. Blessed gospel! well mayest thou be styled "good tidings of great joy." What blessings flow in the gospel channel to exhilarate a thirsty world.

It is the gospel that makes the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice, and blossom as the rose; that makes the parched ground to become a pool, and

the thirsty land springs of water.* How refreshing to the weary child of God, to lie down in green pastures; to be led beside the still waters of gospel grace! How cheering to say, in a world of sin and sorrow and disappointment, with the sweet Psalmist, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Who can describe the blessedness, the glory that are contained in this single verse! Who can enumerate the blessings that flow from the gospel of God!

In this blessed gospel, "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The blood of Jesus, through the gospel, proclaims peace on earth and glory in heaven,—such peace as passeth all understanding, and such glory as the human heart has never conceived. We now turn to notice the source whence all gospel blessings flow. It is in Christ and him crucified that they originate. This is the blessed origin of all goodness, the inexhaustible fountain of love to guilty, rebellious man. In the gospel, a bleeding Saviour is held up in a manner so conspicuous as to attract the attention, and excite the admiration of all anxious inquirers after salvation. They look to

* Isa. xxxv.

him and are lightened of the burden of sin and guilt. His grace is so free and his love so unbounded, that all may look and be saved. And all that look to Jesus and renounce their own righteousness shall be saved. A bleeding Jesus is the sum of Christianity, and the only hope of a lost world. In him all fulness dwells, around him all blessings flow, from him all glories emanate.

“ Dear Jesus, fill my soul
With holiness and peace;
Arise with healing in thy wings,
Thou Sun of Righteousness.

“ May all beneath the sky
Usurp my heart no more;
Be thou my first, my chief delight,
My soul’s unbounded store.

“ In thee all treasures lie,
From thee all blessings flow;
Thou art the bliss of saints above,
The joy of saints below.

“ Oh, come, and make me thine,
A sinner saved by grace;
Then shall I sing with loudest strains
In heaven, thy dwelling-place.

“ When standing round the throne,
Amid the ransomed throng,
Thy praise shall be my sweet employ,
While love inspires my song.”

Christ, and him crucified, is the sum and substance of the gospel. What is the gospel but a glorious revelation of Christ crucified, a gracious plan of salvation through the merits of Immanuel's blood! It is only through a crucified Redeemer that we can be admitted into heaven. Our salvation is intimately connected with him. Take away Christ, and you bury our immortal hopes in the dust; you demolish the glorious superstructure of gospel truth.

If there had been no Saviour proclaimed, there would have been no salvation for perishing men,—no gospel of the grace of God. But Christ is revealed in the gospel as the great object of our faith. There he stands as the great centre of all holy attractions,—as the sum of all our happiness. In the gospel revelation, Christ is all. The Bible is full of him. From Genesis to Revelation, he is set forth in all the loveliness of his character, and in all the richness of his grace to dying men. Enraptured prophets dwell on him, inspired poets sing of him, and ardent, zealous apostles blaze his name abroad.

The grand design of a divine revelation is to exhibit Christ and him crucified as the only hope of a lost world. Christ is the glory of the Scriptures, as the sun is the glory of the firmament. "To tak^e Christ from the Bible," says a

writer of other days, "would be like blotting the sun from the firmament." It will avail nothing what discoveries we make, if we find not, to our present and eternal welfare, Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. The key of knowledge will be of little use, unless it opens to us the unsearchable riches of Christ. "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God ; and that believing, ye might have life through his name." The sum and substance of all evangelical preaching is, Christ and him crucified. "We preach Christ crucified," says one of the greatest ministers of Jesus Christ. Christ crucified was the substance of Paul's preaching. With ardent, burning eloquence he dwelt on this glorious theme. This was the grand topic of all his writing and preaching. He set nothing else before the people but Christ crucified. He desired to know nothing more, for he knew that nothing more was essential to salvation than the saving knowledge of Christ, and him crucified. He caught this glorious truth, and published it to a dying world. He summoned all his energies to understand this deep mystery. This was his study. "I determined," says he, "not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Christ and him crucified, is the very life of the gospel. Here all the lines of evan-

gelical truth meet in one central point. Blessed be God, for a crucified Saviour! O my soul, put thy trust in him. Study Christ, and him crucified. He is the life of the soul; the salvation of the sinner. Search the Scriptures; for they testify of him; yes, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* Prophets speak of him as the bleeding sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament points to him as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The New Testament is replete with the history of a crucified Saviour. "Of gospel history, what is the sum? Christ crucified. What do the four evangelists relate? They all, for substance, tell the same story; and that story is rightly termed the gospel. It is the history of the cross. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established. God has graciously given us four, all inspired by his Holy Spirit, to relate the birth, the life, the labors, the preaching, the miracles, the sufferings, and the death of Jesus. They tell us what he said, what he did, and what he endured from the powers of darkness, from the hands of men, and from the sword of justice. They inform us how he was at last condemned, and nailed to the tree, for the testimony which he bore to the truth, that he was

* Rev. xix. 10.

the only begotten Son of God, and that the same divine honors were due to him as to the Father." What a long series of prophecies was accomplished in Christ, and him crucified!

The Spirit of God in all the prophets, testified "beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Christ is the sum of prophecy. To the two disciples going to Emmaus, he explained the prophecies relating to himself. He says to them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." And again, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And said unto them, thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." The life, the sufferings, and the death of Messiah were all foretold in glowing language, by the prophets of God. Moses wrote of Him. Job knew that his Redeemer lived. Abraham got a glimpse of Christ's day, and it gladdened

his heart. Jacob spoke of the coming of Shiloh, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah, transported into future times, cries: "Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Micah foretells the place of his birth, "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." To Daniel the time was revealed, when Messiah should be cut off, to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy. The Psalmist foretold the sufferings and death of Jesus on the cross as if he had actually witnessed them. The 53d chapter of Isaiah, and the 22d Psalm are full of Christ and him crucified.

Thus, all the prophets highly extol Him, who is the great and glorious Deliverer of lost man. Christ and him crucified is the sum of all those good things that God promised to his ancient people,—the substance of all those types, and shadows, and emblems which prefigured good things to come. The whole ceremonial law was

a shadow of good things to come; but "the body is of Christ." The paschal lamb bled on Jewish altars, as the emblem of a bleeding Saviour. Hence Christ is styled, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."^{*} "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."[†] His precious blood is represented to be like that of "a lamb without blemish and without spot."[‡] All the Jewish sacrifices, rites and ceremonies were full of Christ crucified. They pointed to this one great sacrifice for sin. They referred directly to Him, whose death was truly an atoning sacrifice. "The death of atonement, then, which the Son of God died for our redemption, was that to which all sacrifices, from the earliest times, had respect, as their great termination, and without which they would have been as destitute of reason as they were, in their very nature, of all actual value in the very sight of heaven. If holy men of old made an acceptable use of them, in drawing near to God, it was only by looking through them to this all-perfect and sufficient sacrifice which they prefigured. This great sacrifice, accordingly, being offered up in due time, all that were before it, were completely done away, and all that ancient sort of worship went forever out of use."[§]

* Rev. xiii. 8. † John i. 29. ‡ Pet. i. 19. § Bib. Antiq.

Christ crucified is now proclaimed in the everlasting gospel as the substance of all our holy religion. Whoever has faith in him, has religion in his soul. Whoever believes on a crucified Christ, shall be admitted into the Paradise of God, to eat of the fruits of "the tree of life," and to drink of the crystal streams of living water, which flow from the throne of the Deity. O then, give your heart to Jesus, and he will fit you for glory.

Of the ordinances of divine grace, what is the sum? Christ crucified. Their grand design is to set Him forth as a propitiation, through faith in his blood. Of the sacramental supper, what is the substance? Christ crucified. This sweet ordinance is full of Christ and his whole glorious work for the salvation of sinners. In the broken bread and poured out wine, we see nothing but the crucifixion of the blessed Son of God. Here, he is presented to us as the glorious Saviour dying for sinners. Here, we get a glimpse of his matchless perfections—of his transcendent glory. Here, all his sufferings rise up to our view—the sufferings of his holy soul—the agonies of his cruel death. Here is nothing but Christ and him crucified. How the love and grace of the Lord Jesus kindle into a glorious blaze, in this ordinance.

Would you see a lively exhibition of a cruci-

fied Saviour? Then go to the Lord's table; sit down there and meditate on his death, his dying love, his glorious atonement; so will you grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

How highly should we esteem our divine Saviour. With what entire confidence should we rely on him for salvation! Blessed Jesus! Thou art the source of all happiness—the spring of all joy. Thou art all in all to thy people. O satisfy me with thy goodness, that I also may rejoice in thy precious salvation. “Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people; visit me with thy salvation.” Refresh my soul, blessed Lord, with the manifestation of thy grace, and prepare me for beholding thy glory in heaven—for enjoying endless pleasures at thy right hand. May we all be daily feeding by faith, on Christ and him crucified, while we sojourn as strangers and pilgrims here, till we “enter in through the gates into the city,” sit down beneath the shadow of the tree of life, feed upon the hidden manna, and drink of the “pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, that proceedeth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”

In a little while we shall see our Redeemer's face, and his name shall be upon our foreheads.

We shall soon see a crucified Christ—the print of the nails, and of the wound in his side. How lovely and attractive will Christ appear in glory, as our crucified Saviour! When we look on his “dear wounds and bleeding side,” our souls will be lost in wonder, love, and praise. Then we shall be filled with his goodness, and taste through eternal ages the sweetness of redeeming love. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus. Come quickly.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED, THE ONLY HOPE OF THE SINNER.

"The Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope."—1 TIM. i. 1.
"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 COR. iii. 11.

"O THOU dear, anointed Jesus,
All my hopes are fixed on thee;
In thy tender, sweet compassion,
Cast a smile of love on me.

"Come in all thy full salvation,
Deign within my heart to dwell;
Then, with all thy ransomed people,
Of unbounded love I'll tell.

"Fill my soul with heavenly graces,
Gently falling from above;
Meekness, patience, pure affection,
Sweet humility and love.

"Come, thou blest anointed Saviour,
To thy earthly temple come;
Till the hour of death remove me
To my everlasting home."

Christ and him crucified, is the only hope of the sinner. Here is the only substantial, permanent foundation of all our hopes. "For

other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

A crucified Christ is the only hope of the world. In vain do we hope for salvation from any other source. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." The Lord alone is the salvation and strength of his people. The Christian boldly exclaims, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

There is but one refuge provided for a lost world. That refuge is Christ crucified. It is a "strong refuge." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." None are safe out of Christ. He is the only refuge from the storms of divine wrath that will one day sweep away an ungodly world. "Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."* Christ will shield all that come to him. No sinner ever perished that "fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

* Isa. xxv. 4.

In the arms of Christ, we are safe for time,—safe for eternity. An almighty Saviour has said concerning his chosen flock, “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” What a blessed ark of safety for perishing sinners! Christ and him crucified! Happy they who are inclosed in this new testament ark! They will survive every storm, and amid the wreck of a crumbling world, ride safely and triumphantly into the harbor of immortal glory! Happy they whose lives are hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is their life shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory. “Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.”

“Sinners, see the ark prepar’d!
Haste to enter while there’s room;
Tho’ the Lord his arm has bared,
Mercy still retards your doom:

“Seek him while there yet is hope,
Ere the day of grace be past,
Lest in wrath he give you up,
And this call shall prove your last.”

Flee to the ark of safety; hide in Christ. Listen to the gracious calls of your only Saviour. Hear him cry, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about

thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Come without delay. Your Saviour will not reject you. He will receive you into his arms, adopt you into his family, and make you an heir of God, and a joint-heir with him in glory. O, blessed privilege, to reign with Christ in glory! Accept, then, of a crucified Saviour, and heaven will be your everlasting home. You will soon land on the peaceful shores of Immanuel's land; soon be admitted into the presence of Christ, to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. If Christ is your only hope here, he will be your everlasting portion hereafter. If you glorify him on earth, you shall enjoy him in heaven. If you follow the Lamb now, he will lead you unto living fountains of waters, in that "land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign." You will be happy in his service through time, and blissful in his presence through eternity.

If your only hope is the Lord Jesus, he, as the captain of your salvation, will lead you into the promised land. O be sure to enlist in the cause of your crucified Redeemer. Choose him as your only leader. Stand beneath the glorious banner of his love. Follow him on to victory. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life," and you will come off at last more than conqueror through the blood of the Lamb.

Go forward, then, in the strength of you: Redeemer. Say with the Psalmist, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."*

View the glorious prize offered to believers in Jesus! An unfading wreath of glory! A royal diadem of beauty! A kingdom that will never end. The inheritance of all things! "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."† "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."‡ Here is all the happiness of heaven summed up in a few words. But who can declare their import? Who can express the blessedness of being in Christ; of resting our hopes on him? Eye hath not seen it, nor hath the ear heard it; neither has it entered into the heart of man. All this glory is obtained by believing on a crucified Jesus. Is Christ formed in you, "the hope of glory." There is but one road to heaven; that way is through Christ and him crucified. All the re-

* Ps. lxxi. 16.

† Rev. xxi. 7.

‡ Rev. ii. 12

deemed in glory have travelled this road. All who will ever yet enter in through the gates, into the new Jerusalem, will be admitted only through the merits of a crucified Saviour. They must depend on him. There is no other foundation on which to rest. Christ is the way—the only way to the Father, and to a glorious immortality. “I am the way,” says Christ, “and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” “I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” There is no salvation without Christ. There is no other name but his that can save from eternal woe. “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”* In the gospel fabric, Christ is the chief corner-stone. In him is fulfilled that which is written, “Behold, I lay in Sion, a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.”† Jesus Christ is that precious corner-stone on which the Church is built. “The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.” Fix your hopes on Christ and him crucified. Commit your immortal concerns into the hands of a

* Acts iv. 12.

† 1 Peter ii. 6.

bleeding Saviour, and heaven is yours. Come, and intrust your whole salvation to Him, who is the only hope set before you in the glorious gospel.* Fly for refuge to Him. Christ will receive you joyfully. Hear his own gracious language. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." Blessed words? What can be more encouraging.

Despairing sinner, here is hope for you. A crucified Saviour is lifted upon the pole of the everlasting gospel, that you may view him and live. Are you drawn to him yet? The dying Saviour cries, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me."† Jesus Christ is elevated on the cross that a diseased, dying world may get a glimpse of him and live. He is the world's Redeemer. He is the sinner's friend,—his last and only hope. Reject not this only refuge. Here is hope for the vilest of sinners. Christ came to save such. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."‡

* When I consider," said the Rev. R. Simpson, on his death bed, "when I consider the infinite dignity and all-sufficiency of Christ, I am ashamed to talk of venturing on him. Oh, had I ten thousand souls, I would, at this moment cast them all into his hands, with the utmost confidence."

† John xii. 32.

‡ Mat. ix. 13.

"Tell me," says an eloquent living writer,* "where the vilest sinner is to be found that dwells on God's footstool; conduct me to his abode of wickedness and gloom; and if it be anywhere this side the grave, I would assure him in God's name, that he who was lifted up from the earth came to save just such sinners as he." Whosoever believeth on a crucified Redeemer shall be saved. This is the cheering language of inspiration. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."† Then let all look to the cross of Christ. Let all contemplate the Son of God bleeding for their sins. Let all look to Jesus, and live.

"As the serpent raised by Moses
Heal'd the burning serpent's bite,
Jesus thus himself discloses,
To the wounded sinner's sight;
Hear his gracious invitation,
'I have life and peace to give,

Gardiner Spring, D. D. This distinguished divine is one of the ablest writers of the age. We would here recommend his works. They are among the best religious publications of the day, and deserve a place in every Christian library throughout the land.

† John iii 14, 15.

I have wrought out full salvation,
Sinner, look to me and live.

“Pore upon your sins no longer,
Well I know their mighty guilt;
But my love than death is stronger
I my blood have freely spilt;
Though your heart has long been harden’d,
Look on me—it soft shall grow;
Past transgressions shall be pardon’d,
And I’ll wash you white as snow.

I have seen what you were doing
Though you little thought of me;
You were madly bent on ruin,
But I said, it shall not be;
You had been forever wretched,
Had I not espous’d your part;
Now behold my arms outstretched,
To receive you to my heart.

Well may shame, and joy and wonder,
All your inward passions move;
I could crush thee with my thunder
But I speak to thee in love;
See! your sins are all forgiv’n,
I have paid the countless sum!
Now my death has open’d heav’n,
Thither you shall shortly come.’

‘Dearest Saviour, we adore thee,
For thy precious life and death
Melt each stubborn heart before thee,
Give us all the eye of faith;
From the law’s condemning sentence,
To thy mercy we appeal.

Thou alone canst give repentance,
Thou alone our souls can heal."

"And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee." "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." Is this the language of your soul? Do you hope in Jesus? Is he your unfailing portion? Then rejoice in the Lord. Make his glorious name known to a dying world. "Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known to all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

Blessed Jesus! enable us to rely on thee as our only hope. Open our eyes that we may discern thy beauty and excellence. Be thou our hiding place to which we may resort for safety. May sinners flee to thee before the storm arises to overwhelm a guilty world.

"Lord, open sinners' eyes,
Their awful state to see,
And make them ere the storm arise,
To thee for safety flee."

• Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners

of hope." Jesus is willing to encircle you in the arms of his protection and love. Then turn to him. Christ and him crucified is the sinner's "stronghold." Here all are safe. All who now rest in Jesus shall enjoy eternal rest hereafter.

Blessed Lord! lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. May all my hopes be in Jesus, the sinner's Friend. May he be made unto me wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."*

Look to Jesus for wisdom to lead you safely through a dark, bewildering world of sin and folly, to the bright mansions of eternal glory. Lean on him for support, while you journey through the wilderness. Let him be always the beloved of our soul; always "the chiefest among ten thousand" in your estimation; yea always the one altogether lovely. Look to a crucified Jesus for righteousness. He only can clothe the guilty, polluted sinner with the beautiful robes of redeeming righteousness,—with the spotless garments of salvation. Every redeemed sinner in glory must be clad with the radiant vesture

* Psalm xviii. 2.

of a Saviour's righteousness. This alone will make us appear beautiful in the eyes of Jehovah. This alone will place us before his throne, amid the glories of heaven. Blessed righteousness of a crucified Jesus! What glory does it bring to lost man! Then, with Paul, desire to "be found in Christ, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."*

Look to Jesus for sanctification. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The pure in heart shall see God. Jesus will wash every filthy, unclean soul that flies to him, in his own divine blood, and make that sinful soul shine with unsullied purity and perfect holiness through heaven's eternal day.

Look to Christ crucified for redemption. Trust in no other. Hope in no other. Christ is the redemption of his people. They look to him, and are saved. He has bought them with his precious blood. He has prepared them for glory. Through his all-atonning sacrifice, they shall "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God," and be crowned with everlasting bliss. O embrace a crucified Saviour and rest on him in all his saving offices.

* Phil. iii. 9.

Take him as your Prophet, Priest and King. Thus he will be your complete Saviour; your all in all.

The pious author of the Christian Retirement, has the following beautiful remarks: "Christ is the salvation of all his dear, believing people; they look to no other; they love no other; or, if they love others, it is Christ in them who is the chief object of their affection.

"Here I behold a way of access opened to poor perishing sinners, through faith in the atonement of Jesus. Lord, give me faith in thy dear Son. Enable me to cast my soul without reserve upon thy covenanted mercies in Christ Jesus. In him alone is eternal life. In him alone are treasured up grace, mercy, and peace. He that hath the Son, hath life; for this is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Oh for a heart to believe unto righteousness! Blessed Lord, this heart thou only canst bestow. Thou knowest my wickedness and wretchedness; my frailties and follies; my helplessness and total alienation of heart from thee. Thou knowest from what height of happiness I am fallen through original sin, and into what depth of misery I am plunged through wilful transgression. But, Oh sovereign love! Oh matchless grace! thou hast pitied me; thou hast sent thy

Son, thy only Son, to save me. Thou hast assured me that all who believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

In a word, look to Jesus as the great Physician of our sin-sick soul. He only can cure you of all your spiritual maladies. He only can clothe you with immortal health, and angelic vigor in the world of glory. Come to Him, and you shall drink of the healing waters of life, and eternally bloom in the paradise of God.

'How lost was my condition,
Till Jesus made me whole!
There is but one physician
Can cure a sin-sick soul!
Next door to death he found me,
And snatched me from the grave;
To tell to all around me,
His wond'rous power to save.

"The worst of all diseases
Is light, compar'd with sin;
On ev'ry part it seizes,
But rages most within:
'Tis palsy, plague and fever,
And madness—all combin'd,
And none but a believer,
The least relief can find.

From men great skill professing,
I thought a cure to gain;
But this proved more distressing,
And added to my pain;

Some said that nothing ail'd me,
Some gave me up for lost;
Thus ev'ry refuge fail'd me
And all my hopes were cross'd.

“At length this great physician,
How matchless is his grace!
Accepted my petition,
And undertook my case:
First gave me sight to view him,
For sin my eyes had seal'd;
Then bid me look unto him;
I look'd, and I was heal'd.

“A dying, risen Jesus,
Seen by the eye of faith;
At once from danger frees-us,
And saves the soul from death:
Come then to this Physician,
His help he'll freely give,
He makes no hard condition,
‘Tis only, look and live.”

CHAPTER X.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST, THE GLORY OF THE CHRISTIAN.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."—GAL. vi. 14.

" Well may I glory in his cross,
While he prepares my crown."

WHAT wonders are manifested in the Cross of Christ! What fountains of joy does it uncover for the thirsty sinner! What oceans of divine grace does it reveal to the aspiring saint! What glories does it unfold to the ransomed believer! It is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the salvation of the soul. How it displays the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to poor, perishing sinners! O boundless grace, that pitied us when lost! and that rescued us from everlasting burnings! The cross of Christ manifests the free, sovereign, matchless love of God to a lost world.

" How free the love, how rich the grace,
A pard'ning God bestows ;
To Adam's vile, apostate race,
In boundless streams it flows.

"What joy arises in the heart
When Jesus' cross appears—
Salvation to my soul impart,
Subdue my guilty fears.

"Bless'd Saviour, speak the healing word,
Bid all my sorrows cease;
Be thou my Great Atoning Lord,
My Righteousness and Peace."

What joys flow from the Saviour's cross! It is the sight of that cross, which enables the sinner to read his title clear to a glorious immortality. The cross of Christ is full of rich, heavenly blessings. The pardon of sin, the justification of our persons, the sanctification of our natures, eternal life, immortal glory, the endless enjoyment of a triune God in heaven, are some of the blessings which it contains. O my soul, pant after these blessings so fully treasured up in the cross of Christ, and so freely offered to dying sinners. Reader, come to the cross, and these blessings will descend on your head. You will then taste of the fountains of bliss in Immanuel's land, and bathe in the rivers of pleasures which eternally flow through the realms of glory.

"O the sweet wonders of that cross,
Where Christ my Saviour loved and died,
Her noblest life my spirit draws,
From his dear wounds and bleeding side."

Here we have the infinitely tender love, the immensely free, rich grace of the bleeding, dying Immanuel. What a sweet topic for contemplation! What a noble theme for the Christian to glory in! Well might the great Apostle of the Gentiles exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

In the Scriptures the cross of Christ is used in three different senses. 1. It denotes the timber to which our Lord was nailed, and on which he expired. "He endured the cross, despising the shame." "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* 2. It denotes the way of salvation through Christ and Him crucified.

* "The punishment of the cross was a Roman invention. It was made use of only in the case of slaves, or very notorious malefactors. The cross was made of two beams of wood crossing each other. It was laid on the ground and the criminal stretched upon it. A nail was driven through each hand, and one nail through both the feet. It was then lifted upright, and let fall into a hole, where it was wedged in. The crucified man was then left to die hanging by his hands and feet. This was the death to which Jesus stooped." O how amazing was that condescension of God's own Son, which brought him from a glorious throne to a suffering cross! Amazing condescension indeed! O how brightly did that wonderful love of a blessed Saviour blaze on Calvary, when he so willingly, so cheerfully endured the death of the cross there for us sinners.

"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."^{*}

3. It is used to denote the sufferings endured in following a crucified Saviour. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."[†] It was in the Atonement of Jesus made on the cross that the Apostle gloried. This furnishes the ground of the Christian's triumph. This endears the cross to his soul. This makes the sufferings of Calvary appear so glorious in his eye. It was the glorious, finished work of a crucified Redemer on the ignominious cross, that drew from the Apostle's lips, this exulting language: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." By the cross of Christ, is here meant the whole of that sublime scheme of redemption executed on Calvary, by the death of the Son of God. To Paul this was an absorbing topic—his chosen favorite theme. On this adamantine foundation, he built his hopes for eternity.

* 1 Cor. i. 18-23, 24

† Matt. xiv. 4.

This was the blessed source of all his joy—the sublime cause of all his glorying. He gloried in nothing else. At all times, and in every place he visited, Paul gloried in Christ and him crucified. Among Jews and Greeks, Barbarians and Scythians, the learned and the illiterate, this was his delightful theme; in this he exulted. From the top of Mars-hill, he waved the banner of the cross over the proud city of Athens. Nothing could cool the fervor of Paul's attachment to the cross of Christ. "The sacred flame that was kindled on his way to Damascus," says the eloquent Dr. Spring, "burned brighter and brighter, through darkness, through trial, through the floods and through the flames, till it rose pure from the scaffold where he received the martyr's crown, and whence his spirit ascended to receive the crown that fadeth not away." O that every reader would imbibe the spirit of Paul, and glory only in the cross of Christ! The cross of Christ is the Christian's glory. In every age this has been his song. Every true believer glories in Christ and him crucified. A ray of heavenly light from the cross, beams on his soul, filling it with joy unspeakable and full of glory; enabling him to sing in the ways of the Lord and glorify the rock of his salvation. He sees the moral grandeur of the cross its attractiveness; its

dazzling glory. He is thus led to place all his hopes in the cross of the Man of Calvary, and to glory, before an ungodly world, in that atonement made by the blood of Jesus. All his hopes of eternal felicity in heaven, spring from the cross of Christ. No wonder then, that he should extol that Saviour who died to save him, and celebrate that wondrous work which procures for him, endless bliss.

“Tis Jesus died to save,
 ”Tis Jesus lives to bless ;
On high he dwells—the sinner’s friend,
 The Lord, our righteousness.

“Then, Oh my soul, rejoice,
 Extol thy Saviour’s name ;
Make mention of his dying love,
 And celebrate his fame.

“He claims thy heart, thy love;
 He claims thee for his own ;
Oh cast thyself in willing bonds
 Before his heavenly throne.”

It is through an interest in the cross of Christ, that the Christian is enabled to reach the peaceful shores of a happy eternity. Well may he be enraptured with such a theme; well may he glory in such a cross! Not one blessing flows to him but what comes from the cross of Jesus. How innumerable, how invaluable then are the

blessings which proceed from the cross of Christ! Time cannot unfold them. Eternity will roll away in telling their numbers, and in revealing their preciousness. In heaven, we will clearly see how much we owe to the cross of Christ. There, we shall rejoice through a blessed eternity in contemplating the wonders of the cross—in meditating on redemption's glorious work.

O my soul, glory in the cross of Christ now. Rejoice in the finished work of the Lord Jesus. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* Let him glory in a crucified Saviour,—in his atoning blood,—in his perfect righteousness,—in his vicarious death and joyful resurrection,—in his triumphant ascension to glory—in his continual intercession at God's right hand for sinners. Let the Christian glory in that cross which has opened for him the gates of heaven, and which will seat him amidst the ambrosial bowers of paradise, where he shall be perpetually fanned with the cool, balmy breezes of Immanuel's land, and enjoy sweet eternal communion with God and the Lamb. Blessed cross that crowns the sinner with such bliss! Who would not glory in such a theme? Let me exhort the followers of the Lamb to glory in the cross of Christ. Let them glory in Christ and him

* . Cor. i. 31.

crucified. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."* "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee."† "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds."‡ Oh! how often has the cross inspired the Christian with bright heavenly hopes, fired his soul with a foretaste of celestial bliss, and caused his heart to shout for joy amidst the sufferings of mortality.

There is nothing so animating to the Christian as a sight of Calvary. How despicable does the world appear in his view, when he obtains a glimpse of that cross on which his Saviour died! Every thing else loses its lustre when, by the eye of faith, the cross of Christ is seen. Have you seen the glory of the cross of a crucified Jesus? Have you come within sight of Calvary and seen the blood streaming from Immanuel's veins to wash away your sins, and save your soul? Are you delighted with this way of salvation? Does the cross of Christ fill you with joy? Have you seen its attractions? Then glory in it.

Amid all the varied scenes of life—in pros-

* Is. xv 25.

† Ps. v. 11

‡ Ps. xiv. 5

perity and adversity, in health and sickness, in life and death, the cross of Christ is the Christian's glory. Sooner would the children of God lay down their lives than cease to glory in this blessed theme. And they have done so, in thousands of instances. For their attachment to the cross, "they loved not their lives unto the death." How those noble martyrs whose souls ascended to glory amid billows of flame and smoke, loved the cross! How they gloried in it! From the dreadful flames of persecution, many a shout was heard on high, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." In the bloody days of suffering and death, the martyr's dying song at the burning stake has been, "Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome life everlasting." Thus sweetly sung the dying Saunders, as he kissed the stake at which he was bound.

Let the cross of Christ also be your glory. Rejoice in Jesus, your Saviour. "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, rejoice."* Let Christ and his glorious work for the salvation of sinners, be your song in the house of your pilgrimage; and when earth, with all its fascinating pleasures shall have passed away

* Phil. i 4.

like a dream, you will joy in God, in your Saviour, through the rolling ages of a blessed eternity. Standing on "the crystal sea of glass" before the eternal throne of heaven, you will raise a never-ending song of praise to Him who sitteth upon the throne; whose blood redeemed you to God, and in whose cross you gloried on earth. Blessed Jesus! enable each reader to glory in thy cross. Give us all hearts of faith to receive and rest upon thee. May we realize thy preciousness. May thy death be our life, thy cross, our glory. Refresh our souls with the provisions of the cross. Crown our heads with its blessings. Lead us through the "green pastures" and "still waters" of divine grace, and when our pilgrimage on earth is ended, when life's short tale is told, bring us to that blessed home in the world of glory, which is the purchase of thy cross.

"Behold me at the bleeding cross;
Wash out, dear Lord, each guilty stain
Oh, may I count the world but loss—
Thy love my great, my richest gain."

For the numberless benefits and blessings, he derives from the cross of a loving Saviour, the Christian has great reason to glory in it. It is "the tree of life" to the believing soul. Its fruit is spiritual and divine. Those who taste it,

never hunger, never thirst, never die. The blessings which hang clustering on this tree of life are innumerable. Eternity alone can unfold them. Here we taste but drops from the fountain-head above; there we shall forever drink of the water of life in the paradise of God. In heaven we shall enjoy all the blessings of the cross of Jesus; and there we shall eternally glory in it. A few of these rich blessings we now select.

1. The pardon of sin; this is one of the blessings of the cross. The pardon of all our sins, original and actual, was obtained by the death of Christ. "Through this man" (though a crucified Saviour) "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."* There is no remission of sins but through the cross of Christ. This expiates our guilt, and sets us free. Here God, in his unbounded love, removes our transgressions from us, as far as the east is from the west. Here he speaks in merciful tones to the sinner. This is his comfortable language through the cross of Jesus: "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."†

Acts xiii. 38.

† Isa. i. 18.

Through the blood of the cross, pardon flows to a rebel world. O to be interested in that cross which confers such an invaluable blessing upon our sinful race! Well may redeemed sinners glory in salvation by Jesus. "O my soul, my guilty soul, what are all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them, compared with this ineffable blessing!"

2. The cross of Christ procures our justification, reconciles us to God, and clothes us with the robes of righteousness. The cross of Christ justifies the ungodly. The sinner is accepted in the beloved. "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."* The cross of Christ procures our peace with God. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."† He hath made "peace through the blood of his cross."‡ Through the cross of Jesus we enjoy the favor of a gracious God, which is better than life. By the cross of Christ, the world is reconciled to God. No wonder then that the atoning sacrifice, of a crucified Saviour, should be all our boast. No wonder that we should "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The cross

* Acts xiii. 32.

† Rom. v. 10.

‡ Col. i. 20.

of Christ invests the sinner with a robe of purity, the spotless righteousness of Immanuel. All the redeemed in glory have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. In heaven all are beautified with the wedding garment. The righteousness of a crucified Jesus covers all. "That righteousness," says the pious Doddridge, "to which, on believing on him, thou wilt be entitled, shall not only break those chains by which sin is, as it were, dragging thee at its chariot wheels with a furious pace, to eternal ruin, but it shall clothe thee with the robes of salvation, shall fix thee on a throne of glory, where thou shalt live and reign forever among the princes of heaven, shalt reign in immortal beauty and joy, without one remaining scar of divine displeasure upon thee, without any single mark by which it could be known that thou hadst ever been obnoxious to wrath and a curse, except it be an anthem of praise to 'the Lamb that was slain, and has washed thee from thy sins in his own blood.'" Well may we glory in the cross on account of its righteousness.

3. The cross of Christ delivers us from this present evil world. "By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

"A sight of Jesus on the cross
Makes all this world appear as dross."

The Christian looks beyond this dying world to his eternal home in glory. The cross of Jesus enables him to soar on high, and leave the world behind him. He looks forward to the glory that is to be revealed in him. He sets his affections on things above. O, keep gazing on a crucified Saviour, and the world will lose its charms. "Be of good cheer," says Christ, "I have overcome the world." We also shall overcome it, through his cross. It is a sight of the cross of Christ that weans the affections from sublunary objects, and centres them on heavenly and divine things. In this wicked world, the Christian thirsts for God, and pants to reach the mansions of glory. The language of his heart in this wilderness is thus beautifully expressed by the poet:

"I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share ;
Thy wounds Immanuel, all forbid,
That I should seek my pleasure here.

"It was the sight of thy dear cross,
First wean'd my soul from earthly things,
And taught me to esteem as dross,
The mirth of fools and pomp of kings.

"I want that grace that springs from thee,
That quickens all things where it flows ;
And made a wretched thorn, like me,
Blo~~c~~n as the myrtle, or the rose.

"Dear fountain of delight unknown!
No longer sink below the brim;
But overflow, and pour me down
A living, and life-giving stream!"

4. Another blessing of the cross of Christ is the victory over death and the gloomy grave. Death is the last enemy that the Christian has to encounter. But the cross of Christ crowns him with complete victory. It disarms death of its sting and the grave of its terrors. When the swellings of Jordan roll over the believer's soul, the cross of Christ sustains him. When amidst the gloom and darkness of death, a celestial beam from the cross of Christ often shines to guide the Christian pilgrim through the "valley and shadow of death," and to cheer his drooping soul with a prospect of the glories of the heavenly Canaan. The believer is then enabled to exclaim, "yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." It is the cross of Christ that puts this song in the believer's lips. It is Jesus, the sinner's Friend, that smooths the passage to the tomb—to the realms of everlasting day. Precious, crucified Saviour!

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,

While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

The cross of Christ enables the dying Christian to come off the stage of mortal conflict, shouting with Dr. Payson, "Victory, victory! Peace, peace!" or with Dr. Simpson, "O death! where is thy sting? What art thou? I am not afraid of thee. Thou art a vanquished enemy through the blood of the cross!" The cross of Christ converts the king of terrors into a messenger of peace. Now it is gain for the believer to die. When the Christian closes his eyes in death, it is only "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." The cross of Christ enables the believer to finish his Christian warfare with this triumphant song, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

"Jesus, the vision of thy face
Hath overpowering charms;
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace,
If Christ be in my arms."

5. The cross of Christ opens the portals of glory for our reception. It admits us into the presence of God and crowns us with unutterable bliss. There is no way to heaven but through the cross of Christ. When the cross of Christ

was erected on earth, the gates of paradise were opened above. This leads the sinner to glory. The precious blood of Jesus that was poured out upon the cross, is the only procuring cause of heavenly felicity. Jesus died to make us happy—eternally happy. This is the blessed consummation of all his sufferings and death. This was the reason why he groaned in Gethsemane, why he bled and died on Calvary. It was to make you shine eternally in mansions of glory. This is the grand design of the preaching of the cross. It points sinners to a glorious immortality. This is one of its ineffable blessings. Salvation is by the blessed cross of Christ. What tongue can express the felicity of the redeemed before the throne of God! What heart can conceive the unspeakable bliss that the ransomed sinner shall enjoy, to all eternity, through the cross of Christ! “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”* “In thy presence,” cries the Psalmist, “is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”† How different is earth from heaven!

“Here griefs, and cares, and pains,
And fears, distress us sore;

* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

† Ps x.v. 11.

But there eternal pleasure reigns,
And we shall weep no more."

In heaven, the redeemed shall have fulness of joy. What inexpressible joy must fill their souls when they shall see the King of Heaven in his beauty, when Jesus shall dwell among them forever and ever! Then shall they be ever, ever with the Lord. Then shall "the tabernacle of God be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."* Eternal felicity crowns all the inhabitants of heaven. Eternal glory shines around all the mansions of the blessed. The celestial city is illuminated by the glory of God and the Lamb. Of the glory of that heavenly city, in which the saints are to spend ceaseless ages, the following lively description, founded on the word of God, is furnished by the immortal Bunyan: "Now just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets

* Rev. xxi. 3, 4.

also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal. There were also of them that had wings; and they answered one another without intermission, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord. And after that, they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them."

Those happy souls, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and who are on this account presented faultless before the throne of God, shall "serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."* Who would not glory in the cross of Christ, when it confers so many rich, eternal blessings upon a sinful world! In short, all the blessings that are bestowed upon the Christian in his pilgrimage through the wilderness, till he comes to the heavenly Canaan, and all the felicity he enjoys in that world of glory, flow directly from

* Rev. viii 15, 17.

the cross of Christ. From the cross of Christ, he derives ample provision by the way, and when he reaches the mansions of glory, he eats of the fruit of the "tree of life" in the midst of the paradise of God. Here,

"Jesus the bread of life is giv'n,
To be our daily food ;
We drink a wondrous stream from heav'n,
'Tis water, wine and blood.

'Lord, tis enough, I ask no more,
These blessings are divine ;
I envy not the worldling's store,
If Christ and heav'n are mine."

Blessed cross of a crucified Saviour, that brings such glory to God, and such peace and good-will to man !

In conclusion, let me exhort you to glory in the cross of Christ, through life and all its vicissitudes; and when you stand on the verge of the grave, when you feel the chilly embrace of the last enemy; yes, when death shall strike its darts at your vitals, adhering to the banner of the cross, you will be enabled boldly and triumphantly to exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" When you arise to immortality amid the chaos of a crumbling world, while others, in despair, are calling upon the mountains and the rocks to fall on

them and hide them from Him that sitteth on the throne, then, dear believer in Jesus, you will glory in the cross of Christ. As you enter on the saint's everlasting rest, you will triumph in the cross of Jesus; and as you sail on the vast unbounded ocean of eternal blessedness, this shall ever be the unchanging language of your enraptured soul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

CONCLUSION.

SOLEMN APPEAL TO THE READER.

DEAR reader, allow the writer, before he lays aside his pen, perhaps never to resume it, to beseech you to be reconciled to God—to embrace Christ and Him crucified, as your only hope. You have a precious immortal soul to be saved or lost; a soul, the value of which exceeds in amount all the wealth of the globe, yea of thousands of worlds. The value of one immortal soul is faintly expressed by the poet:

“Knowest thou the value of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory; worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze;
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all!”

The redemption of the soul is precious. “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” The soul is destined to live through eternity in the bright realms of eternal glory, or in the dismal regions of eternal misery and despair. O did you ever seriously think of that solemn word,

Eternity! Eternity! Forever! Forever! Think of it now. "But who can measure eternity? compared with whose everlasting lines, myriads of years are infinitely less than atoms floating in the midday sun! All thought is lost in its immensity, and swallowed up in its fathomless abyss." Eternity is yours—is mine. You shall shortly enter upon an eternity of boundless bliss or unspeakable misery. The trump of God shall soon summon a sleeping world to judgment. The eternal destinies of all men shall soon be irrecoverably fixed. The righteous shall be welcomed to the kingdom of heaven, where they shall shine as the sun forever and ever; but oh! how my soul trembles to think of the awful doom that shall be pronounced upon the wicked, on those who have rejected a crucified Saviour, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Did you ever ask that dreadful question, "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"* Of the inhabitants of the pit it is said, that "their worm dieth not," and there "the fire is not quenched." But, blessed be God, there is a way, an only way to escape the wrath to come. This way is through Christ

* s. xxxiii. 14.

and him crucified. "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."* Then flee to Christ; and you shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. You have a loving Saviour. In him compassions flow. Rest in his love; rely on his atonement, and glory in his cross. Our parting advice to you is, to take refuge in Christ and him crucified; and when the last awful storm shall arise to crush an ungodly world, it will only waft you into the harbor of eternal glory. To the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we commend you. In his hands we leave you. May God grant that both reader and writer may meet in that world of glory, where there is no more sin, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor death; and where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Blessed with an interest in Christ and him crucified, and cheered with the hope of a glorious immortality, we will approach our graves in peace;

"Like one that draws the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams;"

and at that solemn period, the resurrection of a sleeping world, we shall arise in a glorious immortal form, free from all corroding disease or

* 1 Thes. v. ix.

painful death, and surrounded with the ineffable glories of the Deity, we shall engage in the sublime raptures of celestial bliss, bathe in that pure river of the water of life that flows through the paradise of God, and drink of those perennial streams which issue from the fountain of life, while eternal ages roll away.

"In cheerful hope my soul relies,
Blest Saviour, on thy dying love,
Until I reach the blissful skies,
And strike the golden harp above."



Wanderings of a Pilgrim.



P R E F A C E

THE design of this essay is to contemplate the Christian pilgrim's journey through the wilderness of this world to that better land, even the Heavenly Canaan—to point out, briefly, the way by which the Captain of our Salvation leads his followers to glory.

It has been the grand object of the author to make the reader feel that he is a stranger and a pilgrim on earth—to make him realize the solemn truth, that man is like to vanity; that his days are as a shadow which passeth away; that mutability and dissolution are the characteristics of all sublunary objects; that—

“All, on earth, is shadow; all beyond
Is substance.”

When we look at the brevity and vanity of human life, we may well exclaim, in the beautiful and touching reflection of Edmund Burke, “*What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!*”—and in the similar impressive language of Patrick Henry, “*I am but a poor worm of the dust, as fleeting and unsubstantial as the shadow of the cloud that flies over the fields, and is remembered no more!*”* Or we may rather open the pages of Holy Writ, and say, with the wisest of men, “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity;” and with other inspired penmen, “As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.”—“For what is your life?

* This essay was composed during the preparation of a large work entitled “The most Eminent Orators and Statesmen of the World;” and in writing the memoirs of Burke and Henry the author was so deeply impressed with these touching thoughts which occur in their lives, that he cannot help repeating them here.

It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Amidst the excitement and bustle of a busy world, it is to be feared that the Christian too often forgets his true character as a pilgrim, journeying to mansions of glory in the skies. Too apt is he to place his affections upon those terrestrial objects by which he is surrounded in his pilgrimage. How often is this the case with the young Christian, over whom the world, with its delusive pleasures, exercises such a fascinating power.

The author would earnestly and affectionately entreat the young reader to pause with this solemn reflection, *I am but a traveller here.* Remember that you are passing rapidly through a scene of shadows and death to a state of eternal realities. O, then, we beseech you to live, as God's dear children, above the world, with your eye directed to that blessed Home in your Heavenly Father's House, where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

Should the few plain words here written be the means of inducing any to pass the time of their sojourning here in the fear of God—of persuading them to live and walk by faith in Christ—to rely, entirely, on His atoning blood for salvation—the author will desire no other reward than the happiness of knowing that he has been an humble instrument, in the hand of God, for doing good.

This essay is now cast, as a mite into the treasury of Biblical Literature, and commended to the blessing of Heaven. May it cheer the Christian pilgrim as he journeys through this world of sin and sorrow, and lead him to strive more earnestly for the glory, honor, and immortality of heaven,—to cleave more closely to Jesus, and to labor more zealously in his cause, so that, when he comes to pass the vale of life he may enter the abodes of immortal glory, and receive the Saviour's plaudit and welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

ARGYLE, N. Y., Nov., 1856.

WANDERINGS OF A PILGRIM.

CHAPTER I.

THIS WORLD A WILDERNESS; AND THE CHRISTIAN A
PILGRIM.

“For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.”—1 CHRON. xxix. 15.

BEYOND this darksome vale of tears and death there lies a bright and joyous region of immortality, where weary pilgrims meet to stray no more. In that happy land their wanderings will have forever terminated, and they shall sit down in everlasting repose under the delightful shadow of the Tree of Life, in the midst of the paradise of God, and enjoy, through the blissful ages of glory; the presence and smiles of that Friend and Saviour who, in the tenderest love for them, once poured out his own most precious blood on Calvary, that he might present them, faultless, before the throne of Heaven

O how transcendently glorious must be the future eternal home of the Christian pilgrim! On those golden plains beyond the river of death, rays of divine glory are beaming in full effulgence. There, the Sun of Righteousness is shining in all his meridian splendor, making eternity one constant noontide of untold and indescribable glory and blessedness—a day without clouds. There, our Immanuel shall be as the “light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds.” Eternal day will dawn without a cloud. No gloom or darkness will ever overspread those blissful realms beyond the shores of time. The celestial world will always be irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb, and the redeemed shall ever bask in the gladsome sunshine of Infinite Love. In that bright home of pilgrims, the Saviour will conduct his ransomed ones to living fountains of waters,—streams of immortal joys, and God shall wipe away all tears. In the presence of Jesus there is fulness of joy; at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has the human heart ever conceived those things which God has prepared for them that love him. An exceeding and eternal weight of glory will crown every pilgrim who has found the happy shores of Immanuel’s Land. In the Palace of

the King of kings, all will be perfectly blessed, and from that "building of God, that house not made with hands," there shall be no more going out; but we shall ever be with the Lord, beholding his glory and enjoying the soul-ravishing manifestations of his endearing love. O, happy abode of Zion's pilgrims! O, sweet and pleasant clime, where the balmy zephyrs of Heaven refresh the weary soul; where there floweth not a tear; where there entereth not a pain; where death itself shall be swallowed up in victory! This is the heritage of them that fear the Lord.

But before our feet stand on the blissful shores of the heavenly Canaan, we have to pass through a wilderness scene. This world is that wilderness, where Zion's pilgrims wander till they are taken home to glory. It is a thorny pathway that leads to the realms of eternal day; but, by the grace of God, the Christian is enabled to hold on the good way with joy, till he passes through the wilderness and over Jordan, more than a conqueror through Jesus, and takes up his seraphic song of triumph amid the undying splendors of immortality.

In this little volume it is our design, as has been stated, to contemplate the Christian in his pilgrimage to the promised land—the happy home of all the true followers of Jesus.

In this chapter there are two prominent ideas which recur in our mind, and which deserve our serious consideration.

1st. This world is a wilderness.

2d. The Christian is a pilgrim here.

1. *To every child of God this world, with all its conceived pleasures, is nothing but a wilderness,—far from his Father's House; far from that goodly land which he so ardently longs to see and to possess.* This is the view which every saint takes of earth; and it is a just one. What the wilderness was to the children of Israel in their journey to the promised land, this decaying scene is to the believer in his progress heavenward. It is not his rest; it is not his home. On the contrary, it is a wilderness world of trouble, from which he is coming up to the mansions above. The dark, rugged pathway lies through imminent dangers and difficulties, which sometimes rise like mountains before the Christian pilgrim, and threaten to retard his march to the land of immortality. But it is a blessed consolation to know that Jesus guards the way to Mount Zion; that he will suffer no evil to befall us; that even here, in this vale of tears, all things shall work together for our good.

The sorrows and bereavements of life render this earth a trying wilderness world to the child

of God. Here, the winds of adversity and floods of sorrow sweep along our path, making us long to reach the blissful hill of Zion, where "no chilling blasts annoy,"—where all is blooming with immortal love and peace. Here, we are almost constantly distressed with difficulties, cares, pains, and griefs, which render this a weary land—"a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death."

It is sin that makes this world a wilderness to the saint. On account of the sin in his heart, he often faints, and is ready to die; he feels that this is indeed a valley of weeping, and longs to arrive at the borders of the wilderness, that he may cross into Canaan.

Besides all this, he has to encounter, in his journey, violent opposition from an ungodly, persecuting world. This makes him cry out, with the Psalmist, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace." In the world, there are fightings without, and fears within. How unlike this dark abode of sin and misery are those radiant mansions far beyond the starry sky! There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary are at rest.

2. *The Christian is a pilgrim here.*—He has only a temporary residence in this vale of tears;

his abiding home is in that world "where mortality ages are no more." Now he is on his journey to those tearless, blissful regions where he is to spend the ceaseless, revolving ages of eternity.

When the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they had no permanent residence, but were continually roving about from place to place; journeying to that goodly land which flowed with milk and honey, and which was then the glory of all lands; "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive and honey." So the believer is a pilgrim on earth, with no continuing city, nor certain place of abode, travelling through a dreary wilderness to that city which shines in the highest noon of glory; to that land of blessedness and immortality, where perennial streams of bliss issue from the eternal Fountain of Life to refresh the weary soul, and where we may freely eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life, in the midst of the paradise of God.

How impressive is the language of Moses to Hobab, in the wilderness: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you." The hosts of Israel, instead of making their abode in the waste, howling wild

erness, were marching forward to obtain possession of that land which the Lord "sware unto their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them." Like those ancient pilgrims, we have a promised land in view, and onward is our motto. Instead of seeking our home and our happiness in a perishing world, we are pressing on to that glorious kingdom which Jesus, in his boundless love, has gone to prepare for our reception, and which he has promised to bestow on all them that love him; for he says: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And again; "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." So the Christian pilgrim, animated by such precious promises, has good hope, through grace, of gaining the happy shores of Canaan; of possessing the heavenly inheritance—of making his eternal abode in the courts of Paradise; and of sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, at the banquet of redeeming love, in the kingdom of God. With such glorious prospects in view, no wonder that he should look upon earth as a barren, homeless world; that he should feel like a stranger and sojourner in it. No wonder that

he should speed his earthly flight to reach the blissful skies.

We are entreated by a compassionate Saviour to seek the better country. In the wilderness, the divine injunction to the children of Israel was to march forward to the land of promise: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Depart and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, unto thy seed will I give it." The same solemn command, reminding us of our short pilgrimage on earth, is sounding in our ears. It is the entreating voice of the Saviour, calling upon us to forsake this present evil world, and seek our portion in the fair realms of eternal day. It is a voice of compassion and love that says to us, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." The Christian pilgrim obeys the divine injunction; sets forward on his journey; leaves the world, looks beyond this dying scene, gazes on the celestial Canaan, till its glories beam upon his soul, till he breathes the pure atmosphere of the upper world, till his ear hears the glorious melody of heaven and his eye catches a glimpse of the king in his beauty, and of the land that is afar off. O says the weary pilgrim, as onward

he journeys with his eye directed towards the heavenly Canaan. In yonder glorious world is my rest and abiding home. Yes:

“There is my house and portion fair;
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home;
For me my elder brethrēn stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come!”

The Christian confesses that he is a pilgrim here.

All the children of Zion—all who have ever travelled to the Canaan on high, have acknowledged that they were strangers and pilgrims in this wilderness world. Of those ancient worthies who died in faith,—in the bright hope of a blessed immortality beyond the darksome grave, and who are held up in the precious volume of inspiration, for our imitation in the Christian life—it is said, they “confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” To this land of shadows and of death, their views were not confined. No. They looked higher than earth. They desired a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. Of Abraham, it is said that he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange

country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise ; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The earthly Canaan was but a type of the heavenly ; and therefore the patriarchs, overlooking the passing scenes of a sublunary world, elevated their views to the true land of promise beyond the skies.

In contemplating his present state, each child of God is ready to exclaim with the Psalmist, when addressing his Heavenly Father in earnest prayer, "I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." His feelings with regard to earthly objects are beautifully expressed in the glowing language of the Christian poet :

" Nothing on earth I call my own ;
A stranger to the world, unknown,
I all their goods despise :
I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a city out of sight,
A city in the skies.

" Not a foot of land do I possess ;
No cottage in this wilderness :
A poor, wayfaring man ;
I lodge awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain."

Thus the Christian pursues his journey and

pitches his tent nearer and nearer Canaan, till he reaches the banks of Jordan, where some appointed herald of glory is ready to conduct his happy spirit to the bosom of Abraham—to the mansions of rest—to the paradise of God.

The believer's life is a progressive one. All the true followers of Jesus are daily advancing in their journey towards the realms of peace. They go on, from strength to strength, through this wilderness scene, until every one of them appeareth before God in the celestial Zion. Their earnest and continued endeavors are to get nearer Heaven, to become ripe for glory; hence, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, they press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They are not satisfied with their present life in the wilderness. It has but little attractions for them. They are not conformed to the world. They do not think of making their abode in this valley of weeping; but onward they travel towards the land of Canaan—that pleasant region which lies beyond the Jordan of death. Their course is upward. "All Christians," says the pious McCheyne,* "are coming up out of the wilderness. Sabbath days are like milestones—marking our way; or

* This refers to his journey to Palestine in 1839.

rather, they are like the wells we used to come to at evening. Every real Christian is making progress. If the sheep are on the shoulder of the shepherd, they are always getting nearer the fold. With some, the shepherd takes long steps. Dear Christians, you should be advancing, getting higher, nearer to Canaan, riper for glory. In the south of Russia, the country is of vast plains, rising by steppes. Dear friends, you should get on to a higher place, up another step every Sabbath day. In travelling, you never think of making a house in the wilderness. So, dear friends, do not take up your rest here; we are journeying. Let all your endeavors be to get on in your journey."

We would earnestly invite you, gentle reader, to accompany us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly country. We would beseech you, with the utmost compassion for your immortal soul, to forsake the path of death, and follow the way of life—the way to undying glory and felicity. In a word, we would most affectionately say to you as Moses did to Hobab, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

CHAPTER II.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN'S JOURNEY—DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY.

"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."—Acts, xiv. 22.

Let us adore the grace that seeks
To draw our hearts above!
Attend, 'tis God the Saviour speaks,
And ev'ry word is love.

No man begins the journey to the heavenly home, until by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, his soul is attracted to Christ, the Living Way, the Truth, and the Life. At that happy hour when the heart is opened, and the understanding enlightened to discern spiritual things, the Saviour's love is the first to beam in mild, sweet, constraining influence upon the soul of the renewed man. He wonders that he was not able before to discern the beauty, the excellence and glory of Immanuel. Now, Jesus appears to him the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Now, he is ready to exclaim, "My beloved is mine, and I am his. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

Thus enlightened by divine grace, the pilgrim

turns from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly Mansions. He leaves the crowded road which leadeth to eternal darkness and woe, and enters on the narrow pathway that conducts the weary traveller to realms of light and bliss. The star of Bethlehem is his guide,—the promises of God's word, his rod and staff; and heaven, his everlasting, happy home. His views are now elevated above the decaying objects around him. His affections are placed upon things above. He contemplates with rapturous delight the bleeding glories of Immanuel, and the shining abode of Zion's pilgrims in the celestial kingdom. He is risen with Jesus. He has become a spiritually minded man. He lives and walks by faith in the Son of God. Though in the world, he is no longer of it; but belongs to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. As an heir of glory, as a traveller to the skies, as an expectant of eternal bliss, he looks above and beyond the troublesome scenes of a fleeting pilgrimage. He enjoys the charming and sublime prospect beyond the precincts of time! He beholds in that brighter world, an ocean of glory, without a shore, and without a storm!

As the Christian pursues his journey, with his eye fixed on the solemn realities of eternity, earth and sublunary grandeur appear to him as transitory as the morning cloud and early dew.

compared with those immeasurable ages of bliss, which roll before his transported vision.

A traveller on his journey, loves to cherish the endearing thoughts of home and domestic happiness. Nothing is so dear to him in all his wanderings as the fireside of his fathers—the land of his birth. In like manner, he who has been constrained, by the Saviour's love, to begin the blessed journey from the wilderness of this world to the heavenly Canaan, will delight to meditate on the riches and glory of his Father's house, in the pure, unclouded realms of eternal day. The Jerusalem above will be dearer to him than any earthly object. His language will be: “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.” In every stage of his pilgrimage, the Christian loves to think of that better land, his true, abiding home, where he shall sing triumphant songs of praise to his Redeemer, and his God.

We have thus hinted at the pleasing view which opens to him from whose eyes the scales of unbelief have fallen,—who is enabled to look at eternal things in the light of God's word; and who has set out upon the Christian's journey, to the celestial city. We shall now notice a few

of the difficulties which lie in the way to glory ; for no sooner does the pilgrim enter on the path of the just than he meets with obstacles. We mention three sources from which the Christian may expect to meet with great opposition in fighting the good fight of faith.

1. *The World.*—The world with its sinful pleasures and enjoyments is calculated to captivate the affections, enchain the heart and impede the pilgrim's progress to the heavenly rest. A thousand fascinating charms are thrown around his pathway through this bewildering world. In city and in country ; on land and on sea—*everywhere*, the soldier of the cross is surrounded by spiritual dangers and difficulties.

Yet the clear path to thine abode,
Lies through this horrid land ;
Lord, we would trace the dangerous road,
And run at thy command.

Love of the world is one great means of retarding our journey to the skies. O, how many have turned aside from following the blessed Jesus, by placing all their affections upon this present, fleeting scene, which in a very few years at most will profit them nothing! “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.” See to it, Christian, that you love not the world. By faith behold the cross of Christ, and the bleed-

ing glories of Calvary, and this world with all its riches and honors will become a dim and dying object in your view.

“Then, pilgrim, let thy joys and fears
On time no longer lean ;
But henceforth all thy hopes and fears
From earth’s affections wean.”

Obey the warning voice of mercy if you would reach the blissful shore: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Notwithstanding the Christian’s endeavors to live above the world, and near to God, how often is he compelled to cry out with the Psalmist: “My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.”

“From earth, and all its empty joys,
Blest Jesus, set me free ;
How vain the worldling’s gilded toys,
Compared with heaven and thee !

“Thou art my hope, my way, my bliss,
My glory, and my crown ;
Descend, thou blessed Prince of Peace,
And make my heart thy throne.”

We must also expect to meet with opposition from an unbelieving world. Those who have

their part and portion here do not love them who have chosen a better inheritance above. The world hates a true follower of the Lamb. Jesus was himself the object of their hatred. No wonder then that his followers should meet with the same reception from unbelievers. The Saviour says to his disciples: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It has been truly said that if we are faithful, we must indeed expect reproach; if we boldly confess Christ before men, and steadily maintain that marked distinction which forms the line of separation between the church and the world, we must submit to have our names cast out as evil.

2. *The Devil*.—The Christian pilgrim will meet with opposition from Satan. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The inspired writers give us directions how we are to meet and vanquish this arch enemy of souls. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in

the faith (*1 Peter*, v. 8, 9). Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (*James*, iv. 7). Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. (*Eph.* vi. 11, 18.) Let us follow this advice, and we shall win a glorious victory, and receive an immortal crown. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly. In the arms of Jesus we shall be safe, eternally safe from the attacks of our subtle adversary. Satan will never be able to pluck a single believing soul from the hands of an Almighty Saviour. Animated by such a consideration, let us press forward in our pilgrimage, armed with the panoply of Heaven; and in a little while the Satanic conflict will be over; then we shall take up sweet, unending songs of triumph in that happy place, where the

wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

3. *The Flesh*.—Another enemy, with which the Christian will have to contend until this mortal shall have put on immortality, is the flesh. As the believer is never perfectly sanctified in this life, the remains of corruption in his heart must be a source of continual annoyance to him in coming up from the wilderness to the land of perfection and bliss. Here, the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. The Canaanites are still in the land; and the soldier of the cross must be always on his guard, lest they surprise and overcome him. “The remainders of corruption require continual watchfulness and circumspection, lest they increase and regain their former possession of the heart. Sin still dwelling in the believer, causes that warfare, which must never cease till this body is laid in the grave, never more to harass the disembodied spirit, encircled with heavenly glory.” How often has the remaining depravity of the human heart made the good man weep and bend, as under an insupportable load, and long to be freed from the bitter thraldom of sinful flesh! This made Paul cry out in the bitterness of his soul, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” But almost with the same breath he

exclaims, as he sees the Great Deliverer, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here, then, is our strength and deliverance. Jesus is the salvation of Israel. In Him we shall obtain complete dominion over the corruptions of our nature. How reanimating to hear that sweet promise whispered in our ears, while we are still in an enemy's land, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Then, if we would overcome all the difficulties which lie in our pathway to immortal bliss—if we would reach the happy shores of Immanuel's Land—let us follow the advice of the Apostle. Let us cast off the works of darkness; let us put on the armor of light; let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying. But, above all, let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

What a glorious reward is held forth to him who is true to the cause of Christ throughout his pilgrimage on earth! "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." O what unutterable bliss awaits the faithful followers of Jesus in that eternal, glorious world toward which they are daily advancing! And

how much is there in the Holy Scriptures to animate us in struggling amid the sorrows and conflicts of the Christian course! They tell us that all the riches and glories of the heavenly Canaan are to be enjoyed through the ceaseless ages of eternity, by those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

The cheering language of the Saviour is, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." And again : "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

"Oft as I look upon the road
That leads to yonder blest abode,
I feel distressed and fearful:
So many foes the passage throng,
I am so weak and they so strong,
How can my soul be cheerful!

"But when I think of Him whose power,
Can save me in a trying hour,
And place on Him reliance,
My soul is then ashamed of fear;
And though ten thousand foes appear,
I'll bid them all defiance.

' The dangerous road I then pursue,
And keep the glorious prize in view,

With joyful hope elated;
Strong in the Lord, in Him alone,
Where he conducts, I follow on,
With ardor unabated.

"O Lord, each day renew my strength,
And let me see thy face at length,
With all thy people yonder:
With them in heaven thy love declare,
And sing thy praise for ever there,
With gratitude and wonder."

CHAPTER III.

ENCOURAGEMENTS—PROVISION BY THE WAY.

‘Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.’—
Is. xxxiii. 16.

“I thirst!—O God, great Source of Love!
Infinite Life streams from above,
O give one drop and let me live!
The barren world has naught to give:
No solace have its streams for me;
I thirst alone for heaven and Thee.”

WHEN the Israelites were marching through the burning wilderness of Arabia to the promised land, God nourished them with bread from heaven, and with water from a smitten rock. Then he opened the doors of heaven, and rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels’ food; He sent them meat to the full. He clave the rock in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers (*Psalm lxxviii.*) The same is true, in a spiritual sense, of Zion’s pilgrims, who are journeying through this barren wilderness.

world to the happy Canaan above. They are encircled in the same Everlasting Arms. Their wants are supplied by the same Almighty Hand. They eat of the hidden manna, and drink of the water of life. How beautifully is this comparison illustrated by the Christian poet!

“When Israel by divine command
The pathless desert trod,
They found, though 'twas a barren land,
A sure resource in God.

“A cloudy pillar marked their road,
And screened them from the heat;
From the hard rocks the water flowed,
And manna was their meat.

“Like them we have a rest in view,
Secure from adverse powers:
Like them we pass a desert, too;
But Israel's God is ours.

“Yes, in this barren wilderness,
He is to us the same,
By his appointed means of grace,
As once he was to them.”

A gracious God, in the infinitude of his love, has provided ample provision for the refreshment and support of weary pilgrims in passing through this dark vale to the joyous realms of everlasting light. Here, he has instituted the precious ordinances of divine grace and salva-

tion, for our joy and happiness till we come to worship Him in His temple above. As our kind Heavenly Father, he has given us the bread of life. Jesus Christ is the true bread from heaven, with which the souls of believers are nourished in their lonely pilgrimage. Says the Saviour, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." The Israelites, in their wanderings in the wilderness, were fed with manna; but we, in our journey to a better land, partake of the fulness of Jesus, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed. Here, in this wilderness,

"Jesus, the bread of life, is given
To be our daily food:
We drink a wondrous stream from heaven,
'Tis water, wine, and blood.

"Lord, 'tis enough, I ask no more,
These blessings are divine;
I envy not the worldling's store,
If Christ and heaven are mine."

Here, we drink of the living waters of salvation—those streams of immortal joys, which

issue from the pierced side of a blessed Redeemer, for the refreshment of thirsty pilgrims, wandering through the deserts of life. The perennial fountain of that river, whose streams make glad the city of our God, is to be found in a suffering Saviour; and at this precious Fountain we may quench our thirst forever.

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him," says Jesus, "shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here is the well of endless life. O thirsty soul, come to a bleeding Saviour, and drink, and live forever. You are earnestly invited to come to the Fountain of Life. These living waters are freely offered to you, to me, to one, to all. This is the language of redeeming love: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (*Is. lv. 1.*) "The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (*Rev. xxii. 17.*) "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." (*Rev. xxi. 6.*)

When the children of Israel left the land of Egypt, the Lord guided them through the path-

less desert by a pillar of cloud and fire until they were brought to the borders of Canaan. Thus the great Leader of his spiritual Israel has kindled a light in this dark and dreary land to guide his chosen people to that glorious realm on high, where it is said, "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." The blessed word of God affords the Christian traveller light, comfort, joy, and provision by the way. Says the Psalmist: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

In the Bible there is every thing provided for the needy traveller to Zion. "It embodies all," says an eloquent living divine,* "that a Christian in this pilgrimage can need. It is his only

* Rev. J. B. Waterbury, D. D., a distinguished clergyman of Boston,—author of "Advice to a Young Christian," "Who are the Happy?" "Considerations for Young Men," &c., &c. These beautiful and excellent practical treatises we would earnestly commend to the attention of every young disciple of the Saviour. They are the productions of an able and pious divine.

chart through this tempestuous life. In trouble, it is his consolation ; in prosperity, his monitor ; in difficulty, his guide. Amid the darkness of death, and while descending into the shadowy valley, it is the day-star that illuminates his path, makes his dying eye bright with hope, and cheers his soul with the prospect of immortal glory."

Ample provision is set before the pilgrim of Zion in a preached gospel. Here it is that his soul is refreshed with the richest streams of divine grace. Here, he draws living water out of the wells of salvation with joy. No wonder, then, that the child of God loves, above all other places in this world, the habitation of God's house. No wonder that his language is

"I joyed when to the house of God,
Go up, they said to me ;
Jerusalem, within thy gates
Our feet shall standing be."

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

But the most abundant provision is procured for needy pilgrims in the Lord's Supper. This is a most precious, a most soul-ravishing ordi-

nance of grace. Surely, if there is a time when the Christian is permitted to lie down in green pastures, by the still waters, in this bleak and barren world, it is during communion seasons, when he draws around that holy table, and meditates on the wonders of Calvary. Then it is that his weary soul is refreshed with the abundance of God's grace, and with the goodness of his house. Then it is that he reposes with the greatest delight under the shadow of Jesus, who protects all his people from the burning wrath of an offended God. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

If there is a moment this side of heaven, when the Christian traveller seems to breathe a purer atmosphere than that of earth, it is when seated at the table of the Lord, he takes into his hands the emblems of Immanuel's broken body and shed blood, and, with the eye of faith turned towards Calvary, views that immaculate Saviour nailed to the accursed tree, bleeding from every pore—in his unparalleled love, dying for rebel man, and by his vicarious death opening the way to God and to glory.

When the believing communicant appropriates Christ and his righteousness as freely offered in this ordinance, he feels as if his happy spirit were fanned by the breezes of paradise. It is

this appropriating act—this feasting on Christ crucified that refreshes the weary pilgrim infinitely more than all the enjoyments of a dying world. This rich provision satisfies the soul as with marrow and fatness: it fills it with joy, unutterable, indescribable and full of glory. Our poor pen cannot describe the joy and peace which a famishing soul experiences when it eats of the hidden manna and drinks of the living water. It is impossible to tell how soul-reviving it is thus to receive a crucified Saviour as ours; to have his goodness imparted to our souls.

“How sweet the sacred joy that dwells
In souls renewed by power divine;
Where Jesus all his goodness tells:
Oh! may this joy be ever mine.”

Come, then, weary pilgrim, and repose in these green pastures, and bathe in the still waters. You will then be invigorated for treading the pathway through the shades of earth to that bright, happy region where you shall forever eat of the fruit of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God; and where you shall drink of that perennial fountain which issues from the throne of the Eternal.

How happy is the condition of Zion’s pilgrims even in this land of sorrow! Their wants are all supplied out of Jesus, in whom it

hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. Their provision is prepared by the God of all grace; and it is sufficient. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. (*Is. xl ix. 9, 10.*)

Go then, Christian traveller, on your way to the peaceful shore of glory, singing, with a cheerful heart, the pilgrim's song:

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

"My soul he doth restore again;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Even for his own name's sake.

"Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill:
For Thou art with me; and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

"My table Thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes;
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflowa.

"Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM IN THE VALLEY OF BACA.

"Who, passing through the valley of Baca." — PSALM
LXXXIV. 6.

"God, in Israel sows the seed
Of affliction, pain, and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds
Which would else o'erspread the soil:
Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

OUR pilgrimage to the Heavenly Canaan lies through a valley of weeping. This earth is a vale of tears: and it is a path which all of Zion's pilgrims must tread until they come to that place where the voice of weeping shall no more be heard. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. (*Acts*, xiv. 22.) Of God's own chosen people, it is said, "Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure." The followers of Jesus must not, therefore, expect to find a smooth road to glory. Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as sil-

ver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidest affliction upon our loins; thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place. (*Ps. lxvi. 10, 12.*)

“Our path is strewed with piercing thorns;
Each step is gained by arduous fight,
Yet wait, till hope’s bright morning dawns,
Till darkness changes into light.”

Some of the trials which render this world a vale of tears, and which the Christian pilgrim is called to suffer, are, bodily sickness, mental anguish, adversity, and bereavement. Who has not experienced some of these afflictions?

1. *Our limits will permit us to notice only the last mentioned—that of bereavement.* And whose cheeks have not been moistened by the tears shed for the loss of some dear companion? Who has not, in this land of death, been called to take the last look of some loved associate in his toilsome pilgrimage?—to see, perhaps, his dearest friends lowered in the cold, dark grave? O how trying to flesh and blood is bereavement! “This is the bitterest of all earthly sorrows. It is the sharpest arrow in the quiver of God. To love tenderly and deeply, and then to part; to meet together for the last time on earth; to bid farewell for time; to have all

remembrances of home and kindred broken up; this is the reality of sorrow;—to look upon that face that shall smile on us no more; to close those eyes that shall see us no more; to press those lips that shall speak to us no more; to stand by the cold side of father, mother, brother, sister, friend, yet hear no sound and receive no greeting; to carry to the tomb the beloved of our hearts, and then to return to a desolate home with a blank in one region of our souls which shall never again be filled till Jesus comes with all his saints; this is the bitterness of grief; this is the wormwood and the gall." This is what the saints of God, as well as the men of the world, are daily called to endure; and this is what renders earth such a vale of tears.

2. *But we would also notice the design which God has in afflicting the righteous.* It is to prepare them for that better land, where there is fulness of joy. It is to draw their affections from earth to heaven—from the wilderness to Canaan. It is to make us mindful of our inheritance above—to make us feel that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth—to make us cleave to Jesus by faith—to make us meditate on the wonders of his redeeming love,—to qualify us for a participation of the joys of the redeemed before the Throne. Our light, mo-

mentary affliction, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "Affliction," says one, "not only profits us much just now, but it will serve us much in eternity. Then we shall discover how much we owe it. All that it is doing for us, we know not now, but we shall know hereafter. It is preparing for us a 'more abundant entrance,' a weightier crown, a whiter robe, a sweeter rest, a home made doubly precious by a long exile and many sufferings here below."

"I wonder," says that godly man of other days, Rev. Samuel Rutherford, "I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what the Lord is preparing for them." "When we shall come home, and enter into the possession of our brother's fair kingdom, and when our heads shall feel the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pain and sufferings, then shall we see life and sorrow to be less than one step or stride from a prison to a glory, and that our little inch of time-suffering is not worthy of our first night's welcome home to heaven." "However matters go, the worst shall be a tired traveller, and a joyful and sweet welcome home."*

* Says the excellent divine, Rev. Hcratius Bonar, of
26*

3. *But amidst all our affliction here we are not without strong consolation.*—The most precious promises are extended to the mourning pilgrims of Zion. There is One that speaks to them in the tenderest love and compassion. God hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. (*Is. xl ix. 13.*) I, even I, am he that comforteth you. (*Is. li. 12.*) There is an eye that watches over suffering pilgrims. There is a hand that smooths the rugged passage to the realms of day. There is a Friend in Heaven, who feels for his sorrowful disciples in this vale of tears. Jesus is that Friend who sticketh closer than a brother; and his encouraging language to his afflicted followers is, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions.” “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

There is a joyful harvest-home for weeping

Kelso, Scotland, “Beloved, ‘it is well.’ It is good to be afflicted. Our days of suffering here we call days of darkness; hereafter they will seem our brightest and fairest. In eternity we shall praise Jehovah, most of all for our sorrows and tears. So blessed shall they then seem to us, that we shall wonder how we could ever weep and sigh.”—*Night of Weeping*, p. 174.

pilgrims in New Jerusalem. In that happy home, no tears shall ever flow, through the glorious ages of vast eternity.

“There purity with love appears,
And bliss without alloy;
There they that oft had sown in tears
Shall reap again in joy.”

Of those who are marching through this vale of tears to Immanuel’s land, our gracious Heavenly Father has said: “They shall come and sing in the heights of Zion; and they shall not sorrow any more at all: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.” Then shall every tear be wiped away from the faces of all the redeemed before the throne of God.

4. *A consideration of the brevity of their earthly trials ought to afford relief to weary pilgrims who are looking to Jesus for eternal life.*—They will not be long in the valley of Baca. They will soon have reached the heights of Mount Zion Our light affliction is but for a moment. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. (*Ps. xxx. 5.*)

How pleasing is the thought that our redemption is every moment drawing nearer. We may well lift up our heads with joy, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Our journey to the

skies is but a short one. We are rapidly advancing to the tearless region. "Every hour that strikes,—every morning that dawns, and every evening that darkens around us, brings us nearer to the end of our pilgrimage." A few more tears of sorrow; a few more days of darkness, and nights of weeping, and we shall ever be with the Lord in that better country, where we shall find fulness of joy in the presence of Him who hath loved us with an everlasting love—who hath washed us from our sins in his own most precious blood, and who will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Then the Lord will be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning be ended. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHRISTIAN ON PISGAH'S MOUNT.

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off."—Is. xxxiii. 17.

"I was a grov'ling creature once,
And basely cleav'd to earth;
I wanted spirit to renounce
The clod that gave me birth.

"But God has breathed upon a worm,
And sent me from above,
Wings such as clothe an angel's form—
The wings of joy and love.

"With these to Pisgah's top I fly,
And there delighted stand:
To view beneath a shining sky,
The spacious promised land."

BEFORE the children of Israel gained possession of the land of Canaan, they were refreshed with a taste of its delicious fruits. In like manner, the Christian, before he reaches the better country, has many sweet foretastes of celestial joys.

Blessed be God! the believer is not always in

the valley of weeping. There are times when he seems to live above the world, and to have nothing but the glories of heaven in his eye. At such delightful seasons, he can adopt the soul-stirring language of Dr. Payson: "The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart."

The views of the pilgrim, when by faith he surveys the better land, are similar to those of the Christian when showed the Delectable Mountains. How beautifully and strikingly is this described by the immortal Bunyan: "Then I saw in my dream, that on the morrow he got up to go forward, but they desired him to stay till the next day also; and then, said they, we will, if the day be clear, show you the Delectable Mountains; which, they said, would yet farther add to his comfort, because they were nearer the desired haven than the place where at present he was; so he consented and staid. When the morning was up, they had him to the top of the house, and bid him look south. So he did, and behold, at a great distance, he saw a most pleasant mountainous country, beautified with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains, very delectable to behold. (*Isa. xxxiii. 16, 17.*) Then he asked the

name of the country. They said it was Immanuel's land; and it is as common, said they, as this hill is, to and for all the pilgrims. And when thou comest there, from thence thou mayest see to the gate of the celestial city, as the shepherds that live there will make appear."

We would notice, in a word or two, *how* and *where* the Christian obtains the most glorious views of that Promised Land which lies beyond the Jordan of death.

1. *As Moses obtained a view of the earthly Canaan from the top of Pisgah, so we get a glimpse of heavenly glory from the mount of meditation—our spiritual Pisgah.*—“By meditation,” says a pious old divine, “I can converse with God—solace myself in the bosom of my Beloved; bathe myself in rivers of pleasures; tread the paths of my rest, and view the mansions of my eternity. What gainest thou, then, O my soul, in this valley of tears? Up upon the mount, and view the Land of Promise. What canst thou look for in this wilderness of trouble? Up upon the wing, and take thy flight to Heaven: let thy thoughts be where thy happiness is, and let the heart be where thy thoughts are: though thy habitation may be on earth, yet thy conversation shall be in Heaven.”

2. *It is while waiting upon God in the courts of his house—while seated at the table of the Lord,*

that the Christian pilgrim sometimes obtains the brightest views of Heaven.—It is in the earthly temple of the Lord that we oftentimes obtain a glimpse of the heavenly mansion. Here it is, that a sweet promise has been repeatedly verified to the children of God: “Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.”

O how delightful is it thus to glance from earth to Heaven—from a dying world to one of immortal bloom—from the turbulent scene of our toil and suffering to the peaceful mansions of our rest and felicity! There is nothing that transports the soul of a weary pilgrim like a faith's view of his eternal rest beyond the swelling floods of Jordan.

“How rich the prospect glows
Beyond this vale of tears;
Where crystal water flows,
And verdure crowns the year.”

Come then, fellow pilgrim, and survey your everlasting happy home. Ascend the Mount of Pisgah, and behold the glorious land before you. View the Celestial City, with its twelve gates of pearls, and its streets of gold, enlightened by the glory of God and the Lamb. See the river of pleasure, with its crystal streams, flowing from the Eternal Throne; and the Tree of Life, with

its twelve manner of fruits, standing in the midst of the Paradise. Behold the countless throng of the redeemed before the throne. Hear their sweet, melodious strains, which shall ever gladden the realms above: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

"There shall the ransomed throng
A Saviour's love record;
And shout, in everlasting song,
SALVATION TO THE LORD."

Above all, contemplate your blessed Redeemer, seated on his great white throne, encircled with heavenly glory. Look at the King in his beauty. It is the sight of a glorified Saviour that will make the heaven of the believer. Endeavor now, by the eye of faith, to behold the Lord Jesus in all his matchless beauty and excellence. Contemplate his glorious character; his infinite mercy; his unparalleled condescension, and his boundless love. There is enough in Jesus to employ the soul in rupturous meditation through a vast eternity.

his excellence, his goodness, and his love can never be fathomed. O, then, keep your eye fixed on this adorable Saviour, while you sojourn in this vale of tears; and in a little while you shall see him as he is,—face to face, and ascribe to him unceasing praise.

How reviving to the weary Christian traveller, from the top of Pisgah, is a view of his distant, happy home in the Heavenly Canaan! His feelings on this delightful spot are well expressed in the following beautiful lines:

“As when the weary trav’ler gains,
The height of some o’er-looking hill,
His heart revives, if ‘cross the plains
He eyes his home, through distant still.

“While he surveys the much loved spot,
He slightes the space that lies between ;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey’s end is seen,

“Thus when the Christian pilgrim views
By faith, his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renewes,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.

“The thought of home his spirit cheers,
No more he grieves for troubles past ;
Nor any future trial fears,
So he may safe arrive at last.

“ ’Tis there, he says, I am to dwell
With Jesus, in the realms of day ;
Then I shall bid my cares farewell,
And he will wi’ e my tears away.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE POSTURE OF THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM IN COMING UP FROM THE WILDERNESS OF THIS WORLD.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?"—CANT. viii. 5.

"But, firm as on a rock,
The saint on Christ relies ;
He smiles in death's dissolving shock,
And mounts into the skies!"

THE Jewish church came up from the wilderness, leaning on the Eternal God for her support. He was the Guide, the Rock, the Salvation of his chosen Israel. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. (*Deu. xxxii. 10-12.*) In like manner, the Christian church in passing through the deserts of life, has Israel's God for Leader. The same gracious eye that watched over the wan

dering tribes of Israel in their long journey through the Arabian wilderness, is now watching with the tenderest care and love over that chosen band, who have forsaken all for Christ, and who are marching through a changing, terrestrial scene to a higher, brighter, nobler world on high. The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him: upon them that hope in his mercy. (*Ps. xxxiii. 18.*) He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye. (*Zech. ii. 8.*) The same kind hand that led Israel of old to the promised land, guides the humble followers of Jesus to mansions of glory in the skies. The Lord of hosts is with us. (*Ps. xlvi. 7.*) The eternal God is our refuge; and underneath and around us are the Everlasting Arms.

In the 8th chapter of the Song of Solomon we have the posture of the pilgrim, advancing to the celestial city, beautifully presented to us: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" Here we see the blessed object on which the Christian reposes, while passing through this scene of fluctuating and perishing mortality. He relies entirely upon Jesus Christ, the Beloved of his soul. He looks to no other source for protection and support. He hopes in no other refuge. His language is, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

We would advert to a few ways in which a believing soul, in coming up from the wilderness, rests on Jesus, the sinner's Friend.

1. *He rests on him for strength.*—The poor pilgrim has no might in himself; but relying on Christ, he can say with holy Paul, “When I am weak, then I am strong.” What a happy thing it is to feel our own weakness and nothingness in the sight of Heaven; and then to cast ourselves into the strong arms of Jesus—those arms of infinite love, which encircle and sustain all the righteous. The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. (*Prov. xviii. 10.*) It is by leaning upon the Beloved of our souls that we are made strong.

Helpless pilgrim, would you obtain strength for gaining the joyful heights of Zion? Then look to Jesus. Rest in him now; and in a little while, when you cross into Canaan, you will rest with him in that happy land, where weariness and sorrow are unknown. Do not trust to your own strength; but wait upon the Lord, and you will be upheld with divine grace and power. Then you will be enabled to press onward with the greatest speed and alacrity to the heavenly mansions. The Lord is the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. (*Joel iii. 16.*) He giveth power to the

faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (*Is. xl. 29-31.*)

“Blest Jesus, to my soul
Thy grace and strength impart;
Till, clothed in perfect righteousness,
I see thee as thou art.

“As I wander through the desert,
Be my constant help and stay:
Shine upon my path, and lead me
To the realms of endless day.”

Happy is he who in the morning of life casts all his care upon Jesus; who takes the Saviour as his all and in all—as the strength of his heart and his portion forever. He may sweetly sing as he is tossed upon the surging billows of life’s ocean, “O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song he also is become my salvation.”

“But Jesus is my living way,
My only trust: my hope, my stay;

From him, I all my strength receive,
And daily on his fulness live."

2. *The Christian cleaves to Jesus by faith.*—He knows that his Redeemer liveth, and he rests his whole weight upon him. He lives upon an unseen Saviour. Our life in the wilderness is a life of faith. Here, we live by faith and walk by faith. This will be the manner of our life until we come to behold our Redeemer face to face in the Heavenly Jerusalem, and enjoy all the blessedness of that better country above. But such a life is one of comfort and joy to the Christian pilgrim in this wilderness land. "O! the blessedness and joy of faith! How does it bring near, and realize a view of Christ in glory! Do we indeed see Christ by the eye of faith? Is he the one chief object of our souls? Is he precious to us? Verily, then, we shall count our days on earth toilsome ones, and long for the full fruition of him in glory. It will be our great joy to see Him, whose blessed head was crowned with thorns, and whose lovely face was spit upon, for us: till then, let us live by faith in him, constantly crying, 'Come, Lord, Jesus, come quickly!'"

Though the believer may be walking in darkness, yet he must still, by faith, lean upon the Beloved of his soul. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of

his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. (*Is. l. 10.*) The pathway to the celestial mansions is often obscured by darkness. Here, at best, we see but through a glass, darkly.*

“Darkness overspreads us here,
But the night wears fast away:
Jacob’s star will soon appear,
Leading on eternal day!”

The commission of sin is the great cause of the Christian being often left to wander in darkness. “Your iniquities, says the prophet, “have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” How sad is such a condition! When, for a season, the light of God’s countenance is withdrawn from the believer, he is led to cry with pious Job, “Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness.” Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive

*We are but as wayfaring men, wandering in the lonely night, who see dimly upon the distant mountain-peak the reflection of a sun that never rises here, but which shall never set in the ‘new heavens’ hereafter.”—BONAR.

him : on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him : he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him ;” and with the Psalmist, “ My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God : when shall I come and appear before God ? ” And he can also say with the pious Cowper, who trod a gloomy path to the realms of day,

“ O for a closer walk with God !
A calm and heavenly frame !
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb ! ”

The duty of the Christian, walking in darkness, is to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Let him always be found relying upon his Beloved ; and, though his days on earth may be darksome ones, yet at the “evening time” of his pilgrimage “it shall be light.” How sweet will be the light of Heaven to such a soul !

“ We journey in a vale of tears ;
But often from on high
The glorious bow of God appears,
And lights up all our sky.

“ Then through the breaking clouds of heaven
Far distant visions come,
And sweetest words of grace are given,
To cheer the pilgrim home.”

In order to obtain the greatest light and comfort now, let the follower of the Lamb be found diligently improving the means of grace and salvation, which God has afforded him. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (*Col. iii. 16.*) How often has a beam from Heaven darted upon the pilgrim while engaged in the sweet employment of praising God!

“Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in his wings;
When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain.”

3. The believer rests on Jesus for righteousness and pardon.—The language of a renewed soul is, “In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.” In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. (*Is. xlv. 25.*) Man had no righteousness of his own to justify him in sight of Heaven. Not a single soul could have gained the celestial Paradise if the Son of God had not assumed humanity, and by a life of obedience and suffering, fulfilled the violated

law, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Blessed be God! the Son of Righteousness has arisen upon our benighted world; and Zion's pilgrims walk in his light. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (*Rom. x. 4.*) In the 23d chapter of Jeremiah he is called, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Every believer in Christ is arrayed in that linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints. His robes are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

How happy is the condition of the saint! His sins are all cancelled by the atoning righteousness of our Lord and Saviour, whose language is, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." As the Christian pilgrim journeys towards the realms of peace, leaning upon Jesus for righteousness and pardon, he can raise his voice in triumphant songs of praise to his Redeemer. This is one of his sweetest songs in the house of his pilgrimage: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in his God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

He can also look forward to the dark waters of Jordan, and say, with the poet,

“ When death shall loose the silver cord,
 Obedient to thy mandate, Lord,
 My soul shall joy and peace possess,
 If Jesus be my righteousness.”

4. *The Christian pilgrim relies on Jesus for guidance through this vale of tears to the peaceful shore of a blessed eternity.*—Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. (*Ps. lxxiii. 24.*)

“Jesus, on thee our hope depends,
 To lead us on to thine abode :
 Assured our home will make amends
 For all our toil while on the road.”

Amidst all the vicissitudes of a sublunary scene—in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness, in life and death, the weary pilgrim reclines on the Almighty arm of Jesus, and all is well. He knows that what the Saviour has promised, he will perform; and he reads, with unspeakable delight, these precious promises: “I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.” (*Ps. xxxii. 8.*) “And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” (*Is. lviii. 11.*)

5. *The believer trusts in Christ for eternal life.*

Of that little flock who have chosen the better land for their inheritance, Jesus says, "I will give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand;" and again: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me shall never die." This is the most precious promised blessing of the covenant of grace. No created mind can comprehend the full import of these words—**ETERNAL LIFE!** They include in them the highest bliss of Heaven. Such a life will the Saviour eventually bestow upon those who now repose in him. There is a blissful hour fast approaching, when the weather-beaten pilgrim shall be raised above the storms of life by the Saviour's hand. Beyond the swellings of the Jordan of death there is a peaceful shore, a happy land, where the pilgrims of Zion shall be invested with the robes of immortality, and reign with Christ forever and ever.

Fellow pilgrim, we would earnestly invite you to come and put your trust in Him who will sustain you amid the heart-rending trials of this vale of tears, and who will bring you to a better land—who will bestow upon you an immortal existence, an unfading wreath of glory in that world beyond the stars. In all your wanderings

through this world, cleave closely to Jesus. Live to Him who died for you. O, may the redeeming love of the blessed Saviour constrain you to be wholly his. Live with an eye fixed upon his cross. Turn to that sacred mount, and behold a Saviour expiring for your salvation; hear him exclaiming, "It is finished."

"O the sweet wonders of that cross,
Where Christ, my Saviour, loved and died;
Her noblest life my spirit draws
From his dear wounds and bleeding side."

Go, then, and live upon Christ. Live in the daily contemplation of his glorious atonement, and in the sincere belief of his all-sufficiency to save your soul. May your language ever be that of an enraptured Apostle: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

If you thus live by faith in Christ, and in the blessed hope of a glorious immortality, you need not fear, at the close of life, to tread along death's dark vale—to cross Jordan's swelling stream; for in that solemn hour, Jesus will sustain and comfort you by his presence; and God will redeem your soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive you.

"O, could I find, from day to day,
A nearness to my God,
Then would my hours glide sweet away,
While leaning on his word.

"Lord, I desire with thee to live
Anew from day to day,
In joys the world can never give,
Nor ever take away.

"Blest Jesus, come, and rule my heart,
And make me wholly thine,
That I may never more depart,
Nor grieve thy love divine.

"Thus, till my last, expiring breath,
Thy goodness I'll adore
And when my frame dissolves in death
My soul shall love thee more."

CHAPTER VII.

PASSAGE OVER THE JORDAN OF DEATH.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."—
Is. xlivi. 2.

"How sweet the hour of closing day,
When all is peaceful and serene,
And when the sun, with cloudless ray,
Sheds mellow lustre o'er the scene!"

"Such is the Christian's parting hour,
So peacefully he sinks to rest;
When faith, endowed from Heaven with power
Sustains and cheers his languid breast."

As the Christian pilgrim is about to leave the wilderness of this world forever, he has to cross a dark stream. The Jordan of death rolls between this world and the Celestial Canaan. Before they obtained full possession of the promised land, the Israelites had to pass over Jordan; so every traveller to the Canaan above must cross over the river of death, before he is admitted into the courts of paradise, and obtains possession of the heavenly inheritance.

In the 3d chapter of Joshua we have an in-

teresting account of the Israelites' passage over Jordan. We there read as follows: "And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, that, as they that bare the ark were come into Jordan, and the feet of the priests were dipped in the brim of the water, that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap; and the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground." Now, all this is typical of the believer's triumphant passage over the Jordan of death. When the fainting Christian pilgrim comes to the brink of this last swelling stream, over which all must pass, Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, who bears the everlasting covenant on his shoulders, goes before and rolls back the surging waves, that the ransomed soul may pass safely over into glory. In the prospect of dissolution, the saint may say, with a Christian poet—

"A swelling Jordan rolls between,
A timid pilgrim I;
But grace shall order all the scene,
And Christ himself be nigh.
He shall roll back the foaming wave,
Command 'the channel dry;

No sting hath death, no vict'ry grave,
With Jesus in my eye."

What we design in the few following pages, is, to comfort the timid Christian in the prospect of death; to show that Jesus is with believers in the dark valley; to cite some of the last words of eminent saints, who, sustained and cheered by the Saviour, have passed over Jordan with songs of triumph; and to contemplate the happy termination of the Christian pilgrim's journey, and his joyful entrance upon the rest above.

1. *The precious religion of Jesus affords the strongest consolation to the Christian pilgrim in the view of death.*—There is no reason why he should dread its approach. Its terrors are subdued; its sting is extracted; it is a disarmed enemy. Death cannot harm the child of God; but for him to die is gain. To such it is the beginning of everlasting, celestial joys—the day-break of a glorious eternity. It is only a peaceful slumber in Jesus—an entering into the joy of the Lord. It is but to depart from a land of sorrow and bereavement, and be with Christ, in those happy regions where God shall wipe away all tears from the eye. To the Christian, "death has changed its nature and its name. Call it no more death; it is the sweet sleep of the body, deposited in its earthly bed, under the eye of

the Redeemer, till the morning of the resurrection."

Many pious Christians are held in bondage by the fear of crossing the river of death. Their feelings with regard to this subject are not what they should be. They ought to rise above the fear of dissolution; for Christ has delivered us from this bondage. He has achieved this victory by the assumption of humanity—by destroying the works of the devil, and by passing through the swelling Jordan in our nature. Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (*Heb.* ii. 14, 15.) The Saviour has warmed the cold grave for his disciples. He has made an easy way through the swellings of Jordan for the faithful followers. Why, then, fellow pilgrim, are you afraid to cross this stream when the channel is dry? when you see the footprints of your Redeemer in the bottom? when death is but a sure step into glory? Surely there is no ground for dismay to the believer in that solemn hour which terminates his earthly pilgrimage; but every reason for joyfulness. For we know that if our

earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (*2 Cor. v. 1.*)

There is no condemnation to the believer; for, being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He has peace during his pilgrimage; he has peace in the hour of death. In Christ, he obtains a complete victory over death and the gloomy grave. Washed in the atoning blood of the Saviour, and clad in the snowy robe of his righteousness, he can shout forth joyfully, upon a dying bed, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is Jesus, the sinner's Friend, who disarms death of its terrors—who makes a dying bed so easy to the believer; hence many a once timid pilgrim has been able to say in his last moments, "Is this dying? Is this the enemy that dismayed me so long, now appearing so harmless, and even pleasant?" O, how reviving to that

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there." —

2. *But Christ is with his chosen people in the midst of Jordan.*—His precious promise is: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.” In their passage through death, the Lord upholds and cheers the souls of his ransomed ones by the endearing manifestations of his gracious presence and wonderful love.

“How happy is the dying saint,
Whose sins are all forgiven;
With joy he passes Jordan’s flood,
Upheld by hopes of heaven.

“The Saviour, whom he truly loved,
Now cheers him by his grace;
A glory gilds his dying bed,
And beams upon his face.”

Hence, thousands of God’s children have been enabled to exclaim, while descending into the shadowy vale, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” It was the soul-ravishing manifestation of the Saviour’s presence and love that made the martyrs so joyful at the stake; and it is this that has made many a departing saint burst forth with rapturous joy in such language as this: “Oh! why is the chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of

his chariot? Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!" O what amazing mercy does Jesus often bestow upon his faithful follower in the darksome valley, and in the deep Jordan, when the cold hand of death is upon him!

"Jesus, the vision of thy face
Hath overpowering charms;
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace,
If Christ be in my arms."

3. We now proceed to cite the dying sayings of a few eminent, pious Christians, who have been wonderfully sustained by divine grace during their passage over the Jordan of death.

We mention the following glorious examples:

Donald Cargill: "This is the most joyful day that ever I saw in my pilgrimage on earth. My joy is now begun, which I see shall never be interrupted."

Luther: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; God of truth, thou hast redeemed me."

Thomas Holland: "Come, O come, Lord Jesus, thou bright Morning Star! Come, Lord Jesus, I desire to be dissolved and to be with thee."

John Flavel: "I know that it will be well with me."

Alexander Henderson "I am near the end

of my race, hastening home, and there was never a school-boy more desirous to have the play, than I am to have leave of this world."

Rev. Thomas Cartwright: "I have found unutterable comfort and happiness, and God has given me a glimpse of heaven."

John Locke: "O the depth of the riches of the goodness and knowledge of God."

Rev. James H. Evans: "In Jesus I stand."

Rev. Augustus M. Toplady: "I believe God never gave such manifestations of his love to any creature, and suffered him to live."

John Tennent: "Welcome God and Father—welcome sweet Lord Jesus! Welcome death—welcome eternity. Amen. Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus."

Rev. Samuel Finley: "I see the eternal love and goodness of God. I see the love of Jesus. Oh to be dissolved, and to be with him! I long to be clothed with the complete righteousness of Christ."

Rev. Dr. Waddell: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Ralph Erskine: "Victory, victory, victory."

John Wesley: "The best of all is, God is with us."

Felix Neff: "Adieu, adieu. I am departing to our Father in perfect peace. Victory, victory, victory! by Jesus Christ."

Dr. Bogue: "I am looking to that compassionate Saviour, whose blood cleanseth from all sin."

Dr. Nevins: "Death—Death! Now come, Lord Jesus—*Dear Saviour*."

To Dr. Waugh one said, "You are now in the deep Jordan; have you any doubt that Christ will be with you?" He replied, "Certainly not! Who else? Who else?"

Rev. D. H. Gillette: "O that I had strength to shout! I feel so happy; I hope soon to be able." O, the precious Saviour; what is the world to me, with all its vanity? Give me Jesus." "Do not weep for me, I am going home."

Rev. Dr. Alexander Proudfit: * "When will this lingering conflict end! Oh for a speedy and easy transition! Oh for deliverance from this corruptible body—this body of sin and death! Come, blessed Jesus, dear Saviour, come! come! I long to depart."

Rev. Dr. John H. Rice: "Mercy is triumphant."

* See an interesting Memoir of this man of God, by John Forsyth, D. D.

Dr. Proudfit was long a pastor of the Associate Reformed Church of Salem, N. Y.; and he was one of the most pious and faithful ambassadors of the cross that has shone in the church.

Dr. Nettleton: "It is meet to trust in the Lord."

Rev. Robt. Anderson: "Peace! peace! How gracious God is in so making it all peace!"

Elisha Macurdy: "The Saviour is all my comfort."

Thomas Cranfield: "A few more sighs, and then"—

Wilberforce Richmond: "The rest which Christ gives is sweet."

Mrs. Hannah More: "Jesus is all in all. God of grace, God of light, God of love: whom have I in heaven but thee? It is a glorious thing to die." Her last word was, "Joy."

Mrs. Isabella Graham: "I have no more doubt of going to my Saviour, than if I were already in his arms."

Mrs. Louisa Mundy: "The prospect is to me any thing but gloomy."

Mrs. Harriet Winslow: "How good is the Lord!"

Maria Fox: "I am thoroughly comfortable." "I know my Saviour loves me, and I am reposing in his love."

H. W. Fox: "I am very weak, can scarcely speak, but oh! happy! happy!!" "Jesus, Jesus must be first in the heart. He is first in mine, yes, he is."

"Rev. Thomas Thomason: "This is a dark

valley, but there is light at the end." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." "Lord give me patience." "I hope the Lord is coming quickly."

Thus, we have presented a few dying sayings of several pious Christians who passed the river of death upheld by divine grace.* Innumerable other similar cases might be cited; but these are sufficient to show with what great mercy and loving kindness the Lord generally deals with his people in the hour and article of death. Although many of God's children have not enjoyed such bright, sensible manifestations of his gracious presence in their dying moments—although they may have gone to heaven under a cloud, yet their passage over the Jordan of death was as safe as that of the most joyful believer.

In the matchless dream of Bunyan, we have an admirable description of the triumphant

* The reader who is desirous of pursuing this subject more fully, is respectfully referred to our Treatise on "The Love of Christ," where he will find thirty-one dying testimonies of other saints, none of which are included in the above; and to that excellent work entitled "The Grace of Christ," by the Rev. Dr. Plumer—one of the most pious and faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. We would earnestly commend this volume to all who have felt the sweet constraining influence of the grace of Christ upon their souls.

passage of the pilgrims over Jordan. There we find that the most timid got over as safely as the most fearless. The last words of Ready-to-halt were, "Welcome, life." The last words of Feeble-mind were, "Hold out, faith and patience." The last words of Despondency were, "Farewell, night! welcome, day!" Even his daughter, Much-afraid, "went through the river singing; but no one could understand what she said."

But how transporting were the last words of Mr. Standfast! "This river," said he, "has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me; but now methinks I stand easy, my foot is fixed upon that on which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood while Israel went over Jordan. (*Joshua iii. 17.*) The waters indeed are to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that waits for me on the other side, do lie as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey; my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that head which was crowned with thorns, and that face which was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with Him in whose company I delight myself. I

have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been to me as a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His words I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He hath held me, and hath kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath he strengthened in his way."

4. *Here we see the happy termination of the Christian's pilgrimage on earth.*—His sorrowful days are ended. He has fought the good fight; he has finished his course; he has kept the faith; he has obtained the victory; he has crossed the swellings of Jordan, and gone to receive an immortal crown.

But who can describe the glories which encircle the saint, safely landed on the happy shores of Immanuel's land?

"In vain my fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories that surround the saints,
When yielding up their breath.

"One gentle sigh their fetters breaks;
We scarce can say 'They're gone,'

Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne."

Now the Christian traveller has reached his everlasting home—that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Now the trying scenes of earth are passed, and the wanderer, raised above the storms of life, steps upon another shore; he enters a land, blooming with immortality, and illuminated by the effulgent beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Now he is ever with the Lord. Now he is seated with Immanuel on his heavenly throne. Now he is arrayed in the shining robes of glory, and drinks of the rivers of pleasures at God's right hand. When we contemplate the past suffering condition, and the present felicitous state of such a one, we may truly say: This is he who has come out of great tribulation, and has washed his robe and made it white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore is he before the throne of God, and serves him day and night in his temple. He shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on him, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed him, and lead him unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from his eyes. (*Rev. vii., 14 17.*)

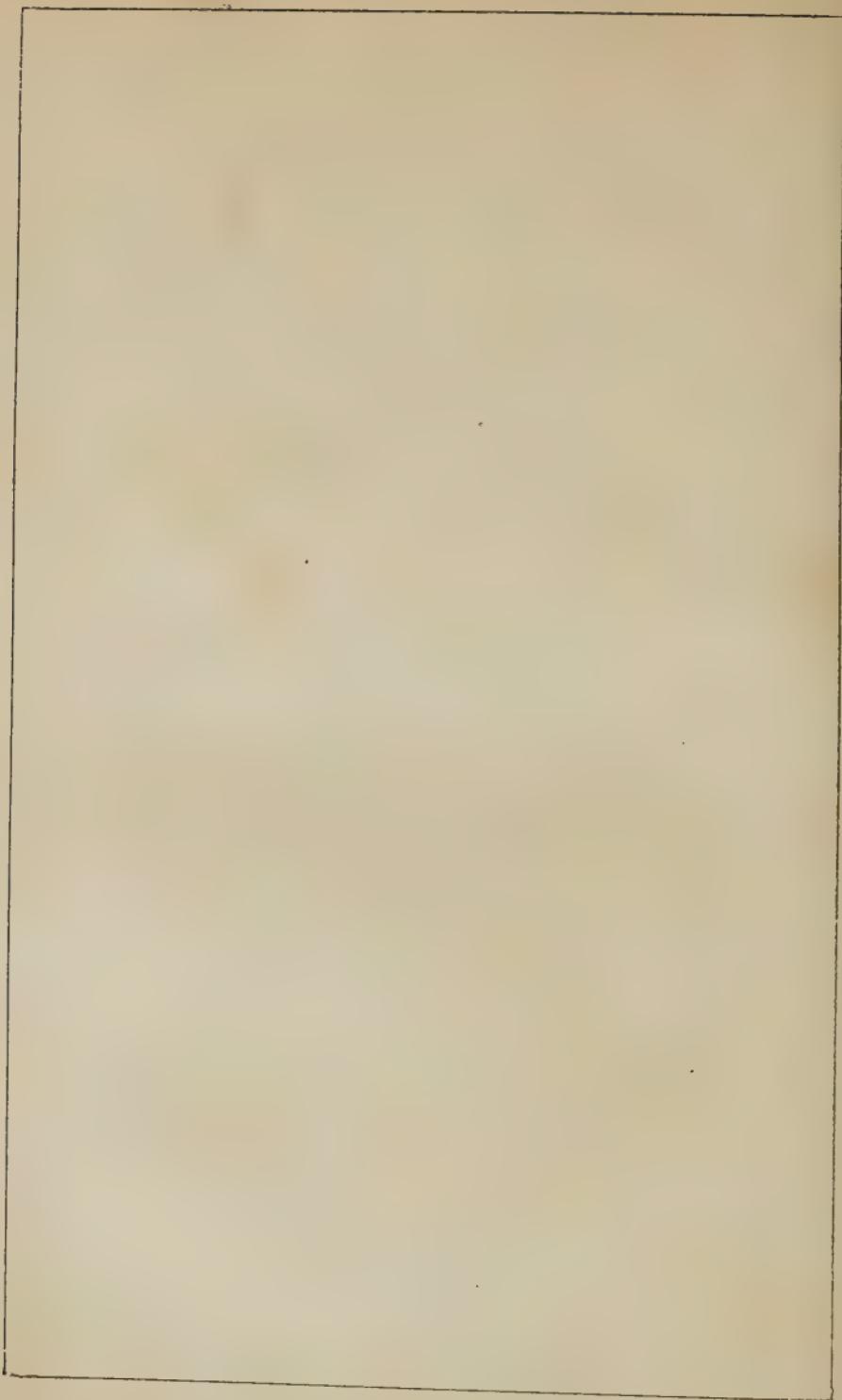
O happy termination of the pilgrim's journey
on earth! O blessed beginning of his felicity
in heaven!

"'Tis past—the voyage of life is o'er,
The wanderer hails another clime;
On perils borne to yonder shore,
He views afar the waves of time.
The storm that muttered o'er his head,
The flame that quivered round his path,
Are sweetly hushed; the cloud hath fled,
And gone the angry lightning's scath.

"'Tis past; and grief is changed to songs
That angel-cordons love to hear;
The harp that to delight belongs,
In softest murmur soothes his ear.
For secret sighs that rent his breast
There's peace to seraphs only known,—
The tear that told the heart, oppressed,
Is gemmed upon the eternal throne.

"Blessed voyager! how happy thou,
Safe moored within the port of peace;
Once heir of death—immortal now,
Of pain—thy toils forever cease.
O, may I, too, thus sweetly rise,
Thus tread yon bright empyrean free,
With joy regain those native skies,
Secure at last in love like thee."

Immanuel's Land.



P R E F A C E.

THE design of this essay is to afford a glimpse of Immanuel's land; to exhibit some of the powerful attractions of that world of glory.

To those who are asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, the author knows that his present theme will be at all times refreshing.

Future felicity in Heaven is the most cheering subject that can be presented for the contemplation of the Christian in this vale of tears. What can be more delightful than for the weary pilgrim who is fast hastening to mansions in the skies, to meditate on the glories of his future home? There is much in this subject to animate us in the thorny pathway to immortality. It affords hope in life's darkest hour; it points with its glorious light to the realms of bliss, where no tear is ever shed and where no sorrow ever enters.

There is much in Immanuel's land to engage our hearts in holy meditation while we scjourn as strangers and pilgrims here. The bright mansions of our Father's house—the many crowns of glory laid up for us there—the joyous rest that remaineth for our weary souls—the sweet employment of the redeemed in glory—the encared so 'ety in the heavenly home, are all presented to

attract us to Heaven—to induce us to set our affections on things above.

Then, let us fix our hearts more steadfastly upon heavenly joys—upon the glories of Immanuel's land.

In handling this delightful subject, the Word of God has been our guide. To this blessed volume we are indebted for all the revelations that have been made of the glory of the celestial world. In the Bible we obtain a glimpse of the glorious land.

May He whose infinite love fitted up those bright abodes of bliss, bless our present effort to the souls of men, in leading them to lay up their treasures in Heaven, and to choose that better part which shall never be taken away from them.

Heavenly meditation is a delightful work, in which our souls should be daily engaged, till we enter the portals of glory, and begin our unending song in the paradise of God. O! may that sweet hour soon come.

"O! soon may Heaven unclose to me!
O! may I soon that glory see!
And my faint, weary spirit, stand
Within that happy, happy land!"

ARGYLE, N. Y., Nov., 1856.

IMMANUEL'S LAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE PLACE.

“I go to prepare a place for you.”—JOHN xiv. 2.

‘There is a world of rich delight,
Where warm affections glow;
Where reigns the everlasting light,
Where crystal waters flow.

“There happy saints securely dwell
From Satan’s deadly power:
Their bliss no mortal tongue can tell,
‘Unfolding ev’ry hour.’

“They dwell with Jesus, and behold
The beauties of his face;
Secure in the celestial fold,
And crown’d by sovereign grace.

“From earth and all its empty joys,
Blest Jesus, set me free;
How vain the worldling’s gilded toys,
Compared with heav’n and thee!

"Thou art my hope, my way, my bliss,
My glory, and my crown;
Descend, thou blessed Prince of Peace,
And make my heart thy throne."

How full of consolation are the Holy Scriptures! They animate the Christian in his pilgrimage on earth; they point out the way of salvation through a crucified Jesus; they lead the ransomed sinner to the gates of the celestial city, and seat him amidst the untold and inconceivable glories of Paradise. The Scriptures urge us to set our affections on the glories of the Christian's eternal home. To those in whose hearts Christ is formed the hope of glory, how beautiful, how tender, how soul-reviving is the language of inspiration! It is written: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

In compliance with the sacred command we shall endeavor, through divine assistance, to raise our thoughts to those scenes of bliss which the redeemed perpetually enjoy before the throne of God and the Lamb. We shall contemplate the place itself, where all the precious flock of Christ are to dwell through an endless day. In connection with this we shall notice a few of the powerful attractions of that blessed abode.

Heaven is a place as well as a state. Among the last words of our Redeemer before he left this vale of tears, we find this cheering declaration and promise: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Precious words from a loving Friend! But follow Him to the land of promise. Christ has now gone to prepare that place for us! O what a place will Jesus prepare for his dear children! What a place will infinite love make! How attractive will it be! Well may we confess our utter inability to portray the regions of glory, and exclaim with an enraptured Apostle, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Language fails to describe the beauties of Immanuel's land, and the human mind to conceive its blessedness. "All the glories of kingdoms, all the beauties of gardens, all the splendor of palaces, yea all the riches of creation, form but a faint sketch of the sublime original." We cannot know what heaven *really* is until we enter into "the holy place" and sit down under the shadow of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. Then shall we see in the

light of glory that it is a happy region - a happy home indeed.

Heaven is a holy place where the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, unveils his glorious perfections in full effulgence. In that blessed place, the Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners, dwells in his glorified humanity. There triumphant saints are gathered home to Christ. There they are made pillars in the temple of God and go no more out. There the host of heaven dwell in the blissful presence of the King of glory.

This blessed place should attract us. We should look beyond this fleeting world. We should endeavor to raise our eyes to Canaan's happy shores, and obtain a glimpse of those everlasting hills whence cometh our help.

Let the Christian ascend the mount of meditation, and, by the help of God's word, survey those fair regions which lie beyond the Jordan of death.

"My soul, on Pisgah's mount ascend,
Where Moses once admiring stood;
There view the promised land extend
Beyond the swelling Jordan's flood.

' By faith survey the landscape o'er,
Where living waters gently flow;
Till earth usurp thy love no more;
Till all thy kindling passions glow."

What glorious prospects are presented to the Christian pilgrim when he, by faith, gazes on the heights of Mount Zion above! There stands the New Jerusalem—the city of our God, in dazzling glory. Through its golden streets the river of life rolls its bright waters; and on the banks of that crystal stream, grows luxuriantly the tree of life, loaded with the richest fruits. To those fountains of immortality the Lamb conducts his white-robed followers, and in tasting of joys the purest and noblest—in feasting on the banquet of redeeming love, the saints spend the ages of glory.

On those “walls of jasper” and “streets of gold” the sunbeams are always shining; but no earthly sun illuminates the celestial city. The glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Our Heavenly Father is there, and his glory is manifested there. Jesus, our elder Brother is there, and he is the center of heavenly attraction—of heavenly glory.

Heaven is a chosen spot—selected by Christ—prepared from the foundation of the world for the eternal abode of the righteous. To the heirs of immortality, Christ will at last pronounce this joyful invitation: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Thus a place is already prepared for the re-

deemed—a place rendered *infinitely* attractive by a display of divine power, wisdom, goodness, and love. The beauty of heaven should attract us. It is a place of perpetual loveliness --a kingdom of unfading glory. The earthly Canaan had many attractions; but what was that to the heavenly? It is the Canaan above that is so glorious. It is that “pleasant land—that goodly heritage” which stretches beyond the swellings of Jordan, that is so attractive to the Christian.

Every child of God longs to reach those bright shores of a purer clime, where everlasting glory bursts upon the weary pilgrim.

Respecting the earthly Canaan, Moses' prayer was;—“I pray thee, let me go over and see that good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.” How much more should every Christian earnestly strive and pray that “an entrance may be administered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The earthly Paradise was a charming spot, where grew every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food—the tree of life also in the midst of the garden; and whence issued a crystal stream to water the lovely region, and to fertilize a blooming world. How delightful to have dwelt in such a home as this; but Im

manuel's land, the everlasting home of God's children, shines far more glorious than ever shone the earthly Paradise.

How consoling to think that every child of God shall finally be brought to that celestial world, to gaze with wondering eyes on its untold glories! What gratitude do we owe to God for providing such an inheritance for us. To Him we should continually raise our hearts in grateful songs of praise. We should call upon our souls and all that is within us to bless his holy name. We should exclaim with the Apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Under many pleasing views, heaven is attractively set forth by the sacred writers. To accommodate their descriptions to our capacities they adopt various emblems, drawn from sublunary scenes. These figurative expressions but faintly exhibit the glory of the land of immortality. But they will suffice us for the present. Indeed, in our present state of existence, we could

not possibly bear the full effulgence of that glory, which will burst upon the ransomed soul when mortality is swallowed up of life.

1. Heaven is represented as a country—"a better country." Of the Patriarchs it is said that they "sought a country;" that they "desired a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heaven is that "pleasant land" to which all Christian pilgrims are travelling. We are now in a wilderness world, where the winds of adversity blow upon us, and the tempests of sorrow sweep along our pathway. But this is not our home. Our march is heavenward—to the glorious land. Guided by the Captain of our salvation we are coming up from the wilderness, and our feet shall soon stand on the glorious mount of God. Our conversation is in heaven; our future inheritance lies there; we are looking on it as our eternal home. No wonder, then, that it should appear so attractive in our eyes. No wonder that we should long to behold the good land which is afar off. All true believers desire that "better country." They feel that they are strangers and pilgrims here; they look beyond this world to those regions of perpetual delight where they expect to spend countless ages. The hope of salvation animates

them in every earthly trial, and the promises of God's word elevate their view above a *crumbling* world. Their hearts overflow with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, when they are assured of the blessed truth that their eyes see the King of heaven in his beauty, and the celestial Canaan in its glory.

Heaven is a promised land. "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord, said, I will give you." God's word is true. Every saint that has lived on earth shall be brought to this heavenly world, where Jesus reigns in all his glory. Cheer up, then, ye drooping saints. View that happy world where your Saviour reigns, and where you, also, are shortly to reign with him.

2. Heaven is described as a glorious city—a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But who can perfectly paint the splendor of that city, whose light is the glory of God? "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion."

Where will you begin to enumerate the attractions of that celestial city—the abode of the redeemed? "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." We can gain but a glimpse of its glories now, in the light of God's word; but they will be seen and told through *all* eternity. With the eye of faith let us now view

the city of our God—the New Jerusalem, set on Zion's holy hill. How dazzling does it appear. Its walls of jasper—its gates of pearls—its streets of gold—the city itself “of pure gold like unto clear glass.”

“Lo! yonder, rising on the eye,
Built on eternal mountains high,
The city of the mighty God,
Where men redeem'd have their abode.

“See, how the many-color'd rays
Of burnish'd gold, and jewels blaze;
Which, sweeter far than earthly morn,
The gates, and walls, and tow'rs adorn.

“How broad and pure the golden street,
Where crowding saints and angels meet!
No lattice there, but full, and bright,
And near, the uncreated light.

“The glory of the God of grace,
Refulgent in the Saviour's face;
In mild, but awful splendor shown,
Upon the highest, brightest throne.

“Nor circling sun illumes the day,
Nor changeful moon-beams nightly play;
No sublunary joys impart
Their pleasure to the Christian's heart.

“He needs them not:—Shechinah pours
A flood of light from all his stores;
There, in the blaze of endless day,
The pur'has'd nations gladly stray.”

When the splendor of "that great city, the holy Jerusalem," was manifested to the beloved John, rapt in heavenly vision on the isle of Patmos, he describes it as "having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was *pure* gold, like unto clear glass. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." How brightly shines the heavenly Jerusalem, irradiated by the glory of God! No city on earth ever shone like this. Palmyra, Nineveh, and Babylon, "the glory of kingdoms," were once splendid cities; but that City of Light, whose foundations were laid before earth rose from chaos; whose builder and maker is God himself, far outshines them all in unutterable splendor. Yes, and when all earthly cities shall have been buried in everlasting ruin —when a terrestrial globe shall have passed away in one awful conflagration, the celestial city of Zion shall shine in eternal glory, while ransomed sinners walk in golden streets.

Let the Christian pilgrim who has set out from the city of Destruction to the city of Immanuel, often contemplate his glorious home. Attracted by its glory, let him look into it, and

long to be among its shining inhabitants, who sound on golden harps the praises of redeeming love. Standing at the gates of the celestial city, let him gaze, with Bunyan, on its splendor, as those pearly gates are opened wide to admit the transfigured pilgrims. "Now just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets, also, were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal. There were, also, of them that had wings; and they answered one another without intermission, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord. And after that, they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them."

Of that city of glory, John declares: "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." There was a temple in the earthly Jerusalem, but there is none in the heavenly. Nor is any required there. Sweet, intimate communion with God and the Lamb will be enjoyed there without a medium. The glorious manifestation of the divine presence will forever dispense with the use of all means of communication between God and his people. Here we worship Him in earthly temples, by the means which he has appointed;

but there, we shall dwell in his immediate presence, and drink at the Fountain of Life.

The celestial city is so gloriously illuminated by the effulgence of the Deity that it has no need of a natural luminary to shine in it. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof." The divine presence sheds such a radiance there that it lights up *all* heaven in everlasting glory. Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, shines there; and in his light we shall see light. Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun; but no light is so sweet as this, and no sun so pleasant to behold as the Sun of Righteousness shining in his meridian splendor.

In that celestial city, there shall be no night. Eternal day beams with unclouded splendor in the city of Immanuel. No natural or moral darkness shall ever overspread the landscape of glory. "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

Hasten on, O sweet day, when thy glories shall dawn upon my longing soul.

Eternal day! arise and shine;
Thy floods of glory roll,
With all these holy joys of thine
Upon my weary soul.

Then shall I dwell in the light of God's countenance, behold the beauties of his face, and worship him forever and ever.

But look again at that celestial city. Emanating from God's eternal throne, the river of life flows through its midst. "And he showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." The heavenly Jerusalem is enriched with "the river of God, which is full of water." This is the stream that makes Immanuel's land to bloom with immortal joys. This is the river of pleasure—the river, whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High." There, the inhabitants of Zion may bathe in the pure fountains of immortality "fast by the throne of God," and drink freely of those swelling streams of purest joy which flow through the realms of glory.

Through verdant vales and flow'ry meads,
His streams the crystal river leads;
From life's eternal throne it strays,
And swelling tides of joy conveys.

In the city of our God is the tree of life, **of**

whose delicious fruit the saints eat, and under whose ambrosial bowers, they dwell in eternal repose, and celestial bliss. “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

There is much in the heavenly Jerusalem to attract you—many crowns of glory—many mansions of bliss—many songs of praise—much that the eye has never seen, the ear never heard, nor the human mind never conceived. Strive, then, to obtain an interest in Jesus, that you may “have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” How cheering is the promise of the Saviour;—“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God!” Then fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, and you will come off more than a conqueror through Him that loved you and gave himself for you.

3. Heaven is represented as a glorious building—the building of God—the future happy home of the Christian. “For we know,” says the Apostle, “that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal

in the heavens." Confident of reaching this blessed home, the believer is enabled to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Heaven is the eternal Father's house, in which are many mansions—the home of the redeemed, where congregated nations sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

When Christ would comfort his sorrowful disciples, he sets forth heaven under the endearing emblem of a home—a Father's house, adorned with many spacious mansions. "In my Father's house," says the Saviour, "are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you."

There is something peculiarly attractive in this description of heaven. How sweet is even an earthly home, but how endeared will be that home above, where we shall meet with our Heavenly Father—with our elder Brother—with our dear Christian friends, who went to glory before us—with the whole household of faith! In that house not made with hands, there are "*many mansions*" for our entertainment. There is ample room and provision for all God's children in the upper sanctuary—every thing to render them happy, unspeakably happy to all eternity.

May the reader so live in the faith of the gospel, that when his clayey tabernacle is ready to crumble into dust, his immortal spirit, guided by the angels of God, may take its joyful flight to the mansions of glory, and dwell forever in those realms of bliss,—

“Where beauty smiles eternally,
And pleasure never dies.”

CHAPTER II.

THE BLESSEDNESS.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."--
Matt. v. 8.

"At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."
—Ps. xvi. 11.

"In those blest regions of delight,
Where Jesus is unveil'd to sight,
No mortal tongue can e'er express
The ransom'd sinner's blessedness."

THE blessedness of heaven is a powerful attraction to draw souls to it. And it is presented in all its charms in the world of God—presented to you—to me. Then let us seek it. If we are *true* believers in Jesus, we shall soon enjoy all that unspeakable blessedness which the Bible now presents to the Christian's view. The blessedness of the redeemed in glory will consist in the exemption from all evil, and in the enjoyment of all good. There will be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain. All will be blessed there in the possession of the greatest good. Every enjoyment in heaven, will conspire to increase and perpetuate the bless-

edness of the saints in light. Those happy souls whose robes have been washed white in the blood of Immanuel, and who are presented faultless before the throne of God, "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The redeemed in glory shall be placed far above the reach of a sinful world, and shall dwell securely in heavenly bliss. There, they shall flourish in our God's holy place. There, they shall be crowned with blessedness, and glory and immortality. How attractive does the blessedness of heaven appear, as presented in the Holy Scriptures! No heart can conceive it—no tongue can express it. It is a boundless ocean of eternal delights. Here, the Christian tastes but drops from the ocean above; but soon he shall stand on the "crystal sea of glass" before the throne, and drink endless pleasures *in*.

Blessed Jesus! Prepare us all for serving thee in mansions above—for participating in those joys which are in thy presence—in those pleasures which are at thy right hand forever. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

In attempting to speak of the blessedness of heaven, we may, in the first place, conceive of it *negatively*. "Not only what *is* in heaven should attract us to it, but what is *not* there."* And do you ask what is not there? We answer, there is no sin—no sorrow—no tears—no pain—no disease—no death, in heaven.

1. No sin there. It reigns in this world; but in heaven its very existence will be eradicated. There the children of God shall never complain of a body of sin and death. Those immortal forms that surround the throne of God are all sinless beings. Sin will never shed its baneful influence in the Paradise above. Satan can find no admittance there. None of his fiery darts will be cast in glory.

2. No sorrow there. In heaven there will be no more "sorrow." It is here—within us—all around us. Who has not felt the withering touch of sorrow? This is a world of sorrow. Here, one wave of trouble after another sweeps over us until we close our eyes in death. "In the world," says the Saviour, "ye shall have tribulation." It is expressly declared, that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." How often have we tasted this bitter fruit of sin! How often have our

* Nevin.

hopes been blasted; our expectations disappointed! How often have we been called to mourn the loss of near and dear relatives! Here our hearts are almost constantly filled with some kind of sorrow. But, dear fellow-pilgrim, cheer up. There lies a bright prospect before us. Has not your eye caught a glimpse of yonder golden plains beyond the grave, where *no sorrow* ever comes, and where you hope to dwell with Jesus, in endless glory? Then go on your way rejoicing in tribulation. Heaven will make amends for all your momentary sorrow here. You will soon forget all sublunary grief in that land of blessedness, where sorrow is no more.

3. No tears there. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;" No expression of grief is there—no "crying"—no mourning. There "sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Happy world, where all the redeemed are, with cheerful countenances, rejoicing in God their Saviour! There no tears bedew the cheek. What a striking contrast is there between heaven and earth in this respect. This world, with all its fancied happiness, is nothing in reality but a vale of tears; and you have not to live many years before you experience the sad truth of this. Here sin has entered, and sorrow has entered, and tears flow; but in the celestial Je-

rusalem "the voice of weeping shall be no more heard, nor the voice of crying." There, dear Christian, "thou shalt weep no more; the days of thy mourning shall be ended." Here the people of God are called to shed *many* tears. "Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure." How consoling, in such a vale of tears as this, to think of heaven! How attractive does that joyful land appear to the mourning Christian! He knows that God will there gently wipe away all his tears. The tears of the righteous will soon cease to flow. In a little while "the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." O, what a happy thought, to think that it is God himself who will wipe away every tear of sorrow in glory! Surely the Christian ought to rejoice now.

4. In heaven there will be no pain nor disease. "Neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Of that celestial world, "the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick." Pain and disease ravage this fallen world. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." Here even the righteous "is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain;" but there God will remove from him all pain and sickness forever. Here the children

of God are often laid on beds of affliction, and "wearisome nights are appointed unto them;" there blooming health shall cheer their souls, and they shall experience pain and disease no more. What a great blessing to be eternally free from all pain and sickness! To the sons and daughters of affliction how attractive should that world appear, where a *kind* Heavenly Physician not only wipes away every tear, but heals all diseases and frees from all pain! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases!"

5. Heaven is a land of immortality. Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In those happy regions beyond Jordan's stream there is no death. "And there shall be no more death." Immortal life will be enjoyed by all the blessed inhabitants of Immanuel's land. How animating in a dying world like this, to think of a glorious immortality! How unlike this land of death is heaven! There all is blooming immortality. Here, in the midst of ~~life~~ we are in death; we are surrounded with the dying and the dead; thousands fall within our view. The young, the beautiful and the vigorous, are not exempted from the painful stroke of the king of terrors. There death it-

self is swallowed up in victory. Here the dearest ties that bind us to earth are cut asunder. Death does not even spare our nearest and dearest relatives. His icy hand is often stretched over the face of a beloved wife—an affectionate husband—a smiling babe—a tender son or daughter—a loving sister or brother—a dear parent. But in heaven, death shall strike its darts no more. How reviving to the Christian who is mourning the loss of pious relatives, to think that in those joyful regions of bliss, he shall meet his dear departed friends who now sleep in Jesus. Then shall we ever be with the Lord in his temple of glory, where parting is no more, and where there is no more painful separation of kindred souls in death.

Let the mourning Christian take comfort from this blessed hope. The last enemy will soon be destroyed. God is just ready to say of his people, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death;" and of death, "O death, I will be thy plague! O grave, I will be thy destruction!" "This corruptible must" soon "put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality: then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." As we enter the portals of glory and place our feet on the blessed shores o' immortal'ty, we may

triumphantly exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" "And there shall be no more death."

We come now to notice the positive blessedness of heaven. And what is there that is so attractive? In heaven, there is not only the absence of all evil, but the actual enjoyment of the highest good—of blessedness unspeakable. There is the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise—the hidden manna—fulness of joy—rivers of pleasures—crowns of glory that fade not away—eternal life—society the most pure, perfect and lovely—sweet communion with God—the glorious presence of the blessed Saviour. And this is enough—enough to satisfy the most capacious desire.

What heart can conceive, or what tongue can describe, the blessedness contained in this single verse of Scripture: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." This blessedness awaits all the children of God. Happy thought! In heaven the saints will be perfectly blessed, in the full enjoyment of God through all eternity. The eternal God will be the inexhaustible source of all their blessedness. From the fountain of Infinite Love they will derive the purest bliss. In the ocean of divine blessed-

ness and glory, they shall bathe forever and ever. The blessedness of the saints will be derived directly from God, the fountain of all goodness. He will supply the wants of all his people. He will crown their heads with immortal bliss. What blessedness must fill the ransomed soul when it is brought to dwell in the presence of Him, " who only hath immortality, dwelling in that light which no man can approach unto ; whom no man hath seen, nor can see : to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." O, to bask in the full beams of His light, whose glory kindles up the realms above in inconceivable splendor ! What must those blessings be which a God of love will confer upon his blood-bought flock ! How innumerable, how invaluable, how soul-ravishing will they be ! In heaven, the blessedness of the saints will flow in an eternal stream from God, their Saviour. There, every soul will be filled with all the fulness of God. O, what rivers of blessedness will flow from the Eternal Fountain !

The redeemed will enjoy all that unspeakable blessedness, arising from a display of the divine glory—from sweet, unrestrained intercourse with God—from the manifestation of a Saviour's love—from the enjoyment of that love through eternity. What more does an immortal soul desire—what more can it enjoy ?

This single attraction, the enjoyment of God in Christ through a blessed eternity, should draw every soul to glory. Such a blessedness, eternity alone can unfold. This blessing will enrich your soul to all eternity.

If you have found the "pearl of great price," all the bliss of heaven will be yours—the pleasures at God's right hand—fulness of joy in his presence—a right to the tree of life; in a word, the inheritance of all things. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Blessed with the presence of Christ, the saints shall enjoy that glorious rest which remained for them. Wearing the crowns of glory which a Saviour's love placed upon their brow, they shall participate in the ecstatic joys of heaven. They shall eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Yes,

The tree of life shall bless their sight,

With golden fruit their taste delight.

Beneath its green and spreading boughs,

The harp shall lull them to repose;

And in seraphic pleasures deep,

Their powe ful senses ever steep.

They shall eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white stone; and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saying he that receiveth it. They shall be clothed with white raiment, and their names shall not be blotted out of the book of life. They will encompass the throne of God with everlasting songs of praise; they shall even sit with Christ on his throne. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

The Lamb in the midst of the throne, is the immediate source of heaven’s blessedness. Christ will ever remain the glorious Head of his living members—his mystical body, the church. He will supply their *every* want. He will provide for them rich blessings—the inestimable blessings of eternal salvation. “They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger or thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.”

The Lamb not only feeds them with heaven’s richest fruits, but also guides them to fountains of bliss—springs of living water. “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed

them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." Blessed lot of the righteous! Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yea, happy is *that* people whose God is the Lord! In contemplating such blessedness, well may we exclaim with the inspired Penman, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency?"

Heaven is a place of eternal blessedness. No change from happiness to misery is experienced there. None of the vicissitudes of earth shall be there. One perpetual scene of bliss crowns all. One wide, unbounded field of expanding blessedness spreads away, far away before every soul clad in glory.

In heaven; there will be an eternal progression in knowledge and happiness. Every new discovery of the ways and works of the Almighty, will roll new tides of glory and blessedness around the ransomed soul. O, what powerful attractions are these! Should they not draw you to glory? What are all the pleasures of a dying world compared with one hour's enjoyment of heavenly blessedness? How worthless! May you possess more permanent joys than those of earth. May it be your happiness to reign with Christ forever and ever. May God grant that every reader of this little volume

may be brought to enjoy that blessedness which is reserved for the righteous, in another and a better world; and to his glorious name be everlasting praise. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

THE JOY.

“In thy presence is fulness of joy.”—PSALM xvi. 11

“There, in thy blissful presence, reigns
Immortal joy serene;
No wintry storms are heard to roar,
Nor desolation seen.

“Around thee flow unmix'd delights,
Like rivers deep and wide;
While from the ocean of thy love,
Proceeds an endless tide.

“Thou of all joy the centre art;
Oh! never from my soul depart;
Blest Jesus! let thy saving love,
Like dew, drop gently from above.”

WHEN the Christian has passed the vale of life, and done with mortal care and grief, the Saviour will welcome him home to glory with this joyful invitation, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” Then begins the heavenly joy of the believer. He rests with Jesus; he enters into the joy of his Lord. And what is this joy? What is there about it that is so attractive? It is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. The

pen cannot describe it, nor the tongue declare it. It is the joy of being with Christ—the joy of possessing the heavenly inheritance—a fulness of joy. The joy of heaven is full, satisfying, and eternal. It is ecstatic joy. It transports the ransomed soul with ineffable delights.

This joy is to be found in the blissful presence of Christ. Blessed Jesus! Thou art the source and centre of heavenly joy. Enable me to fix my heart upon thee. Bestow upon me, thy unworthy servant, the joys of thy salvation. Let me not wander one moment from the path of life. Guide me safely through the wilderness—over Jordan—till, landed on Canaan's happy shores, I see thee face to face, and, in thy presence, taste, through eternal ages, the joys of a redeemed soul.

"In thy presence," cries the Psalmist, "is fulness of joy." There is an abundance to fill every soul. There will be no want of joy in heaven. The saints will always "be joyful in glory."

How ravishing will be the joys of the redeemed in the mansions of glory! What ineffable joy will fill the soul of the believer, when he sits down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of God—when he reigns with Immanuel on his throne—when he views all heaven's bliss as his' Amidst such joys as

these, surely his enraptured soul must be lost in wonder, love, and praise.

But the joy of the glorified saint in the presence of Christ is beyond human comprehension or knowledge.

"His joys are all alike unknown,
As, seated on Immanuel's throne,
He drinks the living streams of bliss
And views all heaven's joys as his."

Let us contemplate the joy of the saint who is presented faultless before the presence of God. There is a glorious day approaching, when "the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion ; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads ; they shall obtain gladness and joy ; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Then shall ransomed sinners begin their songs of joyfulness in the celestial Zion. Then shall all their tears be wiped away, and eternal joy and gladness fill their happy souls.

There are three sources from which joy will be brought to the saint in his glorified and exalted state ; a contemplation of the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*.

1. When he arrives at the realms of glory and looks back upon his past sufferings, how will joy arise in his heart ! With pleasure will

he contemplate the way through which the Lord has led him. Now he sees that all his earthly trials, and afflictions, and sorrows, and tears have come to an end. He has got safely over the tempestuous ocean of life and reached the blessed haven of Immanuel's land. This reflection will afford him unspeakable joy. He views with a joyful heart all the former dealings of God with his soul. Though, during his pilgrimage on earth, he was often ready to exclaim with the afflicted Patriarch when contemplating the providences of God with regard to himself, "All these things are against me;" yet now he sees that "all things" have worked together for his good. In heaven, Christ will make every thing plain to the believer. "What I do thou knowest not now," says the Saviour, but thou shalt know hereafter." The blessed "hereafter" has come when the Christian will know why so many calamities befel him on earth; why so many afflictions were sent upon him, why so many sorrows were strewed around his pathway to immortal bliss. All was fitting him for glory. Every trial, every affliction was lifting him higher towards heaven. Now, that he has reached the blessed shores of glory, he will joyfully exclaim, in the view of the *past*, "O, Lord, thou hast led me forth by the right way."

2. Look again at the joy of the saint with

Christ as he views his present glorious state. How will his heart overflow with seraphic joy and love, when he sees his Redeemer, who is to him the most attractive of all objects, and the blessed source of his joys! If, not having seen, he loves him, and in him, though now he sees him not, yet believing, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory, what will be the joy when he shall see him as he is, face to face, in the heavenly kingdom, in all his matchless beauty! Of this joy we can know but little. It passeth human thought. All the preciousness and loveliness of the Saviour will then appear to view. This will fill the soul with unutterable joy. The enraptured saint will be enabled to exclaim without fear or hesitation, "My Beloved is mine and I am His; He is the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely." The presence of the Saviour will be a source of unspeakable joy to the Christian. Nothing will cause the heart to rejoice more than this blissful sight of a glorified Redeemer. Christ cheered his sorrowful disciples with this blessed hope. "I will see you again," says he, "and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." From the blessed Jesus will emanate swelling streams of joy to refresh and invigorate the people of God. How sweet is this thought Has heavenly joy any attractions

for my readers? Is not this single consideration—the joy arising from a sight of Christ and his glory, sufficient to lead them to inquire the way to Zion? What more powerful attraction could present itself, to allure sinners to glory? But there are innumerable rivulets of joy that issue from this fountain. The presence and society of the glorious Saviour is a boundless ocean of joy; while the enjoyment of heavenly bliss, the communion with saints and angels, are the streams of pleasure that are lost in this fathomless abyss. As the saint views his present condition, he sees that it is one of perfect blessedness. What emotions of joy must thrill through his soul when he sees himself encircled with divine glory; when he views all the present bliss of heaven as his; when he is made a partaker of all the soul-ravishing enjoyments and delights of paradise!

3. But this is not all. As he views the *future*, one perpetual scene of blessedness lies before him. Ages of glory in endless succession, in which he is to possess fulness of joy in the presence of God, roll away before his blissful imagination. What ineffable joy must spring up in his heart as he contemplates eternal bliss! He sees before him an ocean of glory without a shore, and without a storm. An eternity of glory must surely fill his soul with inexpressible

joy. With the greatest delight will he meditate on eternity. This is the crowning glory of the whole. The anticipation of the future will afford the saint present felicity; and as he sails over the boundless ocean he will rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Concerning his people, a God of infinite love has said, "Everlasting joy shall be unto them."

The joys of the redeemed in glory have no end. Those happy souls before the throne of God fear no termination to their heavenly felicity. Well may the poet exclaim:—

"Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end;
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light."

Thus we have briefly noticed heavenly joy, but the half is not told. O, that every reader may be attracted by those unspeakable joys which are in the presence of God. Let him contemplate these joys, let him anticipate them, and he will look beyond the fleeting delights of an evil world, to those pleasures which are at God's right hand forever. Earth will then lose its attractions, and heaven be ever in his eye.

Let the Christian take courage in his pilgrimage; let the joy of the Lord be his strength. Let him remember, that though this world is a night of weeping, yet there is a bright morning

coming—a morning of everlasting joy. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” Let the weeping Christian remember that he will soon reap in joy—that he shall joy in God, his unfailing portion through a glorious eternity. “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

May a bleeding Saviour be your all and in all; and when his glory shall be revealed, may you, among countless millions, be one who shall be glad also with exceeding joy.

Rest in Jesus, and in a little while all will be well.

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

“Joy is a fruit that will not grow
In nature's barren soil;
All we boast till Christ we know,
Is vanity and toil.

“But where the Lord has planted grace,
And made his glories known

There fruits of heavenly joy and peace
Are found, and there alone.

"A bleeding Saviour seen by faith,
A sense of pard'ning love;
A hope that triumphs over death,
Give joys like those above.

To take a glimpse within the veil,
To know that God is mine;
Are springs of joy that never fail,
Unspeakable! divine!

"These are the joys which satisfy,
And sanctify the mind;
Which make the spirit mount on high,
And leave the world behind.

"No more, believers, mourn your lot,
But if you are the Lord's;
Resign to them that know him not,
Such joys as earth affords."

CHAPTER IV.

THE GLORY.

"The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them"—
JOHN xvii. 22.

"The ransom'd soul, in glory clad,
Shines brighter than meridian sun,
The weary pilgrim, now so sad,
There finds his toilsome journey done.

"Cheer up, ye saints, oppress'd with grief,
With joy expand your drooping wing;
Jesus affords the kind relief;
Jesus extracts the envenom'd sting.

Soon will you reach the blest abode,
Where happy pilgrims ever reign;
Soon shall you see the face of God,
And all the bliss of heaven obtain."

Heaven is a glorious place. Its glory should attract us. How delightful to think of heavenly glory! How it raises the soul above earth! Let us soar on high and view the glory of the New Jerusalem, and of the saints in light. We have seen that the glory of God and the Lamb irradiates the celestial world. There, the Sun of Righteousness always shines, and his beams gladden the hearts of a ransomed host. There

God smiles, and the nations of the saved walk in the light of his countenance. There is one perpetual noon tide of glory in the mansions above. There is glory—"an exceeding and eternal weight"—reserved in heaven for them that love God.

When the whole assembly of the redeemed shall stand on Mount Zion, they will shine as the sun in eternal glory. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Then "they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever." Glory shines in Immanuel's land. The city, the mansions, the inhabitants, are all glorious. Every believer in Jesus will be crowned with everlasting glory. Though we could not bear the effulgence of heaven's glory, should it now beam upon us, yet we know that when we awake to immortality, that glory shall be revealed in us. We know that when Christ, our glorious Head, shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. O to be like the blessed Jesus! What heart can desire more? If we are His people we shall soon be like him. Our bodies shall shine like his—like that wondrous Personage whose original glory once beamed on Mount Tabor, when his face shone as the sun, and when his raiment

was white as the light. In heaven, the wonders of Mount Tabor will ever be exhibited; and there the pure radiance of the Saviour's glory will always beam upon redeemed millions. Who can conceive this blessedness? How desirable, how attractive does it appear to an immortal mind! From those heights of bliss, every soul will be ready to exclaim with Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." But more than this. The saints will be made partakers of the Redeemer's glory." "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." "The Lord will give glory." Amazing love! that Christ should exalt his followers to such bliss, and crown them with such glory!

But who can describe the glory of the saints with Christ, contrasted with which, the splendor of this world is darkness itself!

On what John saw in the revelation of the heavenly world, and of the redeemed in glory, an eloquent living writer* has the following beautiful and glowing expressions:

"The glory of the meridian sun—the intense brightness of the furnace—the pure radiance of the light—the transparent beauty of the rainbow—an ocean of gold, translucent as the crys-

* Stephen H. Tyng, D. D., of New York, one of the most eloquent divines of the present age.

tal—precious stones, of every hue, and of the richest forms—fountains, ever sparkling with living water—streams, with an unceasing flow of perfect purity—trees of unchanging verdure, clothed with endless varieties of beautiful fruit—living beings, of the noblest and most exalted aspect, clad in garments which earthly art in vain would imitate—music, of the tenderest influence and of the most overwhelming power; sometimes the single melody of a heavenly harp and voice, and again flowing forth in a volume of harmony, like approaching thunders, or the majestic waterfall, or the mysterious rolling of the sea—a state of being, in its aspect of loveliness, feebly illustrated by the most perfect bridal beauty and purity of earth. All these, and many like them, are efforts to express to man the things which he saw and heard. But they are all in vain. One sentence of his own conclusion sums up his acknowledged inability to describe the glory of the saints with Christ: ‘Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is.’”

To see Christ as he is—to behold his glory—to be made a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed—this is heaven; this is the glory of the saints. I is to this glory that God is “bring-

ing many sons." It is to "eternal glory" that we are called. God is leading his people to his temple of glory—to that city where there is no night, and where they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever. There, a gracious God will bestow upon us the "riches of his glory," and we shall shine to all eternity, in the garments of glory and of beauty. We shall inherit a glorious kingdom, and wear a glorious crown. Our bodies shall be fashioned like unto Christ's "glorious body;" and we shall obtain an exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the smile and presence of God.

In view of our future glory, how insignificant do these present afflictions appear? "For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Let the afflicted Christian remember, that his momentary trials and sufferings here, are preparing for him a weighty crown of glory hereafter.

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." How animating is this hope of a glorious immortality! O joyful hope! It cheers us amidst the surrounding gloom of life; it illuminates our pathway to the tomb; it sheds its radiance beyond the grave;

it enables the believer to exclaim, when he is just finishing his earthly course, and about to embark upon the boundless ocean of eternity, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Then, let us run with patience, the race that is set before us, and soon we shall reach the goal of immortal blessedness; then shall the glory of heaven gladden our blissful sight, and the streams of Paradise refresh our weary souls. Let every reader be attracted by the glory of heaven. Let him look to a bleeding Saviour for salvation, and press onward with eagerness to receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

CHAPTER V.

THE REST.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"
—HEB. iv. 9.

"We seek a rest beyond the skies,
In everlasting day;
Through floods and flames the passage lies,
But Jesus guards the way

"The swelling flood and raging flame,
Hear and obey his word;
Then let us triumph in his name,
Our Saviour is the Lord."

THERE is something peculiarly attractive in the description of heaven as a place of rest. Here is something that tends *powerfully* to lead the soul upwards. This fleeting scene of trouble is overlooked when the land of Rest is in view.

Heaven is a state of rest—rest reserved for the righteous. How cheering is the blessed truth, "There remaineth a rest to the people of God." How desirable, how delightful is rest to the weary traveller; to those who are almost overwhelmed with the cares and anxieties and afflictions, incident to human life! How re-

freshing to the sons and daughters of affliction—to those whose bodies are “chastened with pain”—is the enjoyment of rest. But what is the rest of earth to that of heaven? O, how delightful will it be for the Christian, after the storms of life to enter the desired haven of eternal rest!

“Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.” Every believer will be enabled to shout, as he steps on the shores of glory, “This is my rest forever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it.” What a rest is here presented to our view, to animate us in our lonely pilgrimage! A rest from sin and suffering—from toil and pain; but not from praise. A rest in the arms of Infinite Love; a rest in Abraham’s bosom, with Jesus, the sinner’s friend. A rest perfect, complete, and eternal. This is the saint’s rest. O blessed rest! where all are resting in eternal love—blooming in eternal joy. Let this attract you. “There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.”

You can find no rest in this world. To the Christian, life is a continual battle-field; without are fightings, within are fears. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wicked-

ness in high places." We are commanded to "put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;" and exhorted to fight the good fight of faith. There is no rest for the Christian here; it is above—in our Father's house—in the mansions of glory.

How animating to think that our rest is near at hand—that our warfare will soon be over—that our pilgrimage will soon be ended! Every day is bringing us nearer our blessed home. That joyful morning will soon dawn, when the soldiers of the cross shall honorably lay aside their weapons, and, with the garlands of victory on their brow, enter triumphantly upon that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

How long and loud will be those songs of victory that shall ring from rank to rank, through that mighty host, who have been more than conquerors through the blood of the Lamb, and who are now brought to enjoy sweet, eternal rest in the bosom of God! How sweet will heaven be to the weary Christian pilgrim when he finds his toilsome journey ended; when from the heights of glory he looks back on a world of sorrow through which he has passed! To the afflicted saint, that "rest" will become sweeter when he reflects on his past sufferings. There, he finds that all his tears are wiped away, and not one joy is

wanting in the presence of his Saviour, and in the smile of his God.

Heaven is now presented to us weary pilgrims with this powerful attraction—Rest. Would you enjoy it? Does your heart aspire after heaven's blessed rest? Then believe in Jesus; rest in him now, and you will soon rest with him in the Paradise of God.

Remember that this is not your rest. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." We are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. This is not our home. We are coming up from the wilderness with our faces Zionward; we are travelling to the celestial city. Our path is rough, but the Saviour sustains us. Our pilgrimage lies through a wilderness, but faith cheers us with a view of the glorious rest of the redeemed in our Father's house—in mansions of blessedness.

And how reviving to think that faith shall soon be turned into sight! Let this consideration animate us amidst the conflicts of life. In a little while we shall obtain a joyous entrance upon the rest above. The storms of life's ocean will soon carry us into the haven of peace, where there is no trouble. We shall soon rest with Christ. Then our pilgrimage will have ended, and our eternal rest have begun. From the temple of God there shall be no more going

out. There, the saints shall enjoy the everlasting rest—the Sabbath of eternity. Let us be admonished to seek the saint's rest now. The language of inspiration is, "Arise ye, and depart, for this is not your rest." Your Saviour, pilgrim Christian, has prepared for you a *nobler* rest than this polluted world. In his Father's house are many spacious mansions, where your happy spirit, after tasting the bitter cup of life's sorrow, shall rest in eternal blessedness. No restlessness will be experienced in the realms of glory. Nor sorrow nor trouble of any kind will be there. There, the redeemed rest from their labors and cares, and doubts and fears, and spiritual conflicts. For them there is an eternal calm—a rest of perfect satisfaction in the enjoyment of God their Saviour. O, what a world is that, where not a wave of trouble shall roll over the soul, where all are resting in the enjoyment of Him, who is "as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Heavenly rest should attract us. "Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." "Return unto thy rest, O my soul: for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

In view of such a glorious rest beyond the

grave, well may we exclaim, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." "For he that is entered unto his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Blessed Jesus! enable me to rely, with cheerful hope, on thy dying love, until I reach the blissful mansions, and enter upon my joyful rest; — ▶

"Then shall I bathe my weary soul,
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll,
Across my peaceful breast."

CHAPTER VI.

THE EMPLOYMENT.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.”—REV. vii. 15.

“And they sung a new song.”—REV. v. 9.

THERE is much in the employment of heaven to engage our hearts and warm our affections. Heavenly employment is the most delightful work in which the soul ever engaged. The redeemed will be filled with ecstasy while engaged in celestial work. The rest of heaven which we have been describing, is not a state of inactivity. O, blessed rest, where “they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” The mansions of glory will be filled with the sweetest melody. The employment in which the redeemed in glory are engaged, is one that should attract every sinner. It is one of everlasting praise and adoration. How delightful to spend eternity in praising God—in contemplating his wonderful works—in admiring his redeeming love! When all the redeemed are brought home to glory, they shall serve God

day and night in his temple. They shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb through a glorious eternity.

In heaven the saints will be meditating on the wonders of creation, providence, and redemption. There the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the works of a vast universe, will be brought to full view. In contemplating Jehovah's mighty empire, all those radiant inhabitants of heaven's mansions shall cast their crowns before the throne of God, and cry, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." What pleasures are to be derived from the contemplation of nature! With what delight have the minds of Bacon and Boyle, of Newton and Herschel, surveyed the magnificence of creation's works! But in heaven, the Christian, with a knowledge infinitely surpassing that possessed by any of these eminent characters, shall range with exquisite pleasure amidst the beauties of Paradise. He shall spend eternal ages in contemplating those wonderful works which an omnipotent arm has scattered in endless variety and beauty around him, and which declare the glory of God, and exhibit his power, wisdom, goodness, and love. The beauty of the celestial universe, the charms of science,

and the pleasures of religion, will forever attract the redeemed in glory. To those who have a proper estimate of the value and importance of natural and divine knowledge, how attractive does that world appear where all are engaged in contemplating the most delightful subjects that can be presented to an immortal mind! In heaven, knowledge will have arrived at perfection. Here, we see through a glass darkly; there, face to face. Here, we know but in part; there, we will know even as we are known.

In heaven, the providence of God over his church and people, and every particular saint, will be beautifully exhibited, causing each heart to exclaim, "Thou hast done all things well." But above all, redemption will be the chief theme of the redeemed before the throne. That glorious work, executed on Calvary by the Son of God, will employ the souls of ransomed saints in holy meditation through the blessed Sabbath of eternity.

With what wonder shall that happy multitude look into this mystery of love to fallen man—the redemption of the soul! With what astonishment will they gaze upon a crucified Saviour, bearing the print of the nails and of the spear on his glorious form. How will seraphic love and gratitude rise in the bosoms of those who have been washed in the blood of

Jesus, when they behold Him in the midst of the throne as the Lamb that was slain for them! A crucified Jesus will be eternally admired as the Lamb slain for the redemption of sinners. He will receive the homage and praise of all the redeemed through eternity. Eternity itself will be too short in which to speak his praise, or tell his preciousness, or proclaim the vastness of his dying love on Calvary. This everlasting song in which all voices shall unite in melodious strains, will be sung in the realms of glory:—“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.”

In the contemplation of redemption, the souls of the redeemed will be lost in wonder, love, and praise. How overpowering will be the display of divine love that shall then shine in the glorious plan of salvation!

The eternal love of the Father, in giving his Son, his only-begotten Son, to die for sinners—the amazing love of the Son, in exchanging the throne of glory for the cross of Calvary—the wonderful love of the Holy Spirit, in applying redemption to the soul, will then appear in full resplendency.

How brightly will that love which was once manifested on Calvary shine in the habitation of the redeemed, while glorified saints are employing their noble powers in its sublime contemplation! Redemption will furnish eternal employment for the Christian in that brighter world—his happy home. Eternal ages of glory can never unravel the mystery of redeeming love. Redemption is a theme on which the soul may unceasingly dwell with rapturous delight, and discover brighter and brighter displays of divine love and glory to all eternity. How sweet will be the study of redemption in heaven! That glorious salvation of which “the prophets have inquired and searched diligently,” and which the angels desire to look into, will ever be the delightful and soul-ravishing theme of the redeemed in glory, while eternal ages roll away.

Then the employment of heaven will include in it unending praise. Eternal songs will resound through the mansions of glory. The saints will be employed in praising God—in admiring the beauty and glory of Him who died on Calvary for their redemption. One theme,—one song will employ every soul in glory. It is the wondrous theme—the new song of redemption, that will draw from their lips the loudest notes of praise. “And they sung a new

song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation." "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "And they sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb."

Such is the delightful employment of the heavenly world. Should not this blessed work attract you? Do you not long to join with the redeemed above in those celestial songs of praise to him who died for man? O, then, be entreated to choose a loving Saviour now; and the happy hour will soon arrive when you shall raise your joyful voice in glory, and unite with the ransomed of the Lord in that sweet song which has no dying cadence, and with which the arches of heaven shall entirely resound;—"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

"Oh, holy, holy, holy Lord!
Whom angel hosts adore;
When shall I join in raptured strains,
The bright celestial choir?

In pity view a sinful worm,
A prisoner here below;
A pilgrim journeying through the land
Of darkness, sin, and woe.

"Ten thousand voices round thy throne
Unite in hymns divine;
'Salvation to the Lamb!' they cry,
As high in bliss they shine.

'Fain would I now begin the song,
To thee my God and Friend;
Then mingle with the choirs above,
I praise which ne'er shall end."

CHAPTER VII.

THE SOCIETY.

"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."—HEB. xii. 22-24.

THE society of Immanuel's land forms a principal part of celestial happiness. Were a saint to be excluded from the society of the upper sanctuary, he could not be happy though surrounded by all the glories of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Heaven is a state of sweet, uninterrupted communion. There the redeemed will meet in blissful harmony, no more to separate. There, they shall meet with the people of God who have lived in every age of the world; there they shall converse with those bright angelic beings that never sinned; and there they shall have the blissful society and glorious presence of Him whom their souls love above every sublunar object—they shall be ever with the Lord. The

contemplation of heavenly society should lead every reader to seek the happy shores of that world where all the inhabitants are united in one sweet bond of affection and love.

We shall briefly notice the pure and perfect society that the redeemed are to enjoy through countless ages, in Immanuel's land.

1. In heaven, the saints shall have the society of their redeemed brethren of every age and nation. There, we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of Immanuel. We shall meet with the excellent of the earth. We shall be associated with Patriarchs and Prophets—with Apostles and Martyrs—with all the lovers of the Saviour. And what a blessed society will this be, where every heart is full of love and every tongue flowing with praise.

Can a doubt be entertained that the saints will know one another in glory? Surely not. If the disciples knew Moses and Elias standing on Mount Tabor, may we not expect to know them too, when standing on the Mount of God? Paul tells the Thessalonians that they are his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing at the coming of the Lord; and when he would comfort those who were mourning the loss of pious friends, he sets before them the blessed hope of meeting them on that great and joyous morning when the dead in Christ shall burst the fetters

of the grave and arise to immortality. Nothing will be wanting to perfect the happiness of the redeemed in glory. We may then anticipate the most delightful association—the most intimate acquaintance. O how delightful will it be to converse with Moses and Elias, with David and Isaiah, with Paul and the twelve Apostles of the Lamb; to hear from their own lips the tale of their wonderful history! How joyful will such society be! When we land on the shores of glory we shall enjoy the society of all those faithful ambassadors of the cross of Jesus, who proclaimed salvation to a dying world. There we shall be associated with such men as Luther, Calvin, Baxter, Flavel, Owen, Watts, Doddridge, Edwards, Payson, Chalmers and Mc-Cheyne; men who were so strongly attached to the cause of Christ, and so entirely devoted to his service. All the ransomed of the Lord shall dwell together in one happy home. In the word of God heaven is represented as a social state: "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb." We shall have the most endeared society in the world of glory. We shall meet again, on the peaceful shore, those dear friends with whom we took sweet council together, and went to the house

of God in company, till death parted us. How joyful will that meeting be, when we shall mingle again with our Christian relatives in the Celestial Sanctuary! Then shall we be made pillars in the temple of God, to go no more out.

In Immanuel's land, there is no more parting, and there the word "Farewell" never breaks the heart. What a consolation does this blessed truth administer to the bereaved Christian! Perhaps the eyes of such are now resting on these lines; if so, we say to you, dear reader, "Sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises; and very soon you will reach the peaceful shores of glory, and meet your godly relatives in blissful harmony and adoring praise. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

2. In the celestial world, the saints shall have the society of holy angels—an innumerable company of angels. Those ministering spirits who watched over our footsteps on earth, will be our companions in glory. With them we shall unite in the contemplation of redemption, and join in the praises of Immanuel, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to

receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.— Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever."

3. But the crowning bliss of heaven is the enjoyment of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In those bright realms, we shall enjoy the society of our Heavenly Father; we shall see his face. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." This blissful sight and enjoyment of God is the perfection of happiness—all that the soul desires. No heart can conceive how sweet that communion between a holy God and redeemed saints will be in the mansions of bliss.

There, God will be near his people in a peculiar manner, to bless them with his glorious presence—to comfort them with the full assurance of his love, and the eternal smiles of his countenance.

Then shall "the tabernacle of God be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Standing before his throne, and seeing his face in righteousness, we shall behold the glorious manifestation of his grace and love beaming upon us to all eter-

nity. When we enter the portals of glory, we shall see the King of Zion in his beauty, and be perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of his endearing society through heaven's eternal day.

"There shall I see thy smiling face,
And never, never sin,
There, from the rivers of thy grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

4. The saints shall have the society of Christ in glory. This is the principal attraction of the heavenly world. In those blessed regions, dwells the glorious Saviour with his people. "He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." Oh! to dwell in the presence of Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. What heart can conceive the unutterable joy! The presence of Jesus makes the heaven of the believer. It is the heartfelt desire of every renewed soul to be with Christ—to enjoy his society. The saints never feel themselves happy till they are with Him, who is, in their estimation, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. The presence of Jesus is the very centre of heavenly bliss. It is the felicity—the glory of the saints above. In the presence of our Immanuel there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

When the Christian meditates on the glories

of the Saviour—when he considers that this adorable Saviour died for him—when he reflects that he is soon to dwell with Him in the courts of Paradise, no wonder that he should soar on the wings of faith, beyond the visions of a mortal scene, and exclaim with the Psalmist, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee!” The sweet thought of the society of Jesus in glory made Paul long to be dissolved, that he might be with his Saviour. “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.” “For to me to die is gain.” The blessed hope of entering into the immediate presence of a loving Saviour, made the martyrs pass through flames to the portals of bliss; and it will make every one who knows and is fully assured that his Redeemer liveth, meet death with a smile. When the Christian knows that to die is only to depart and be with Christ, no wonder that he should exclaim with his departing breath, in transports of joy, “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.”

The redeemed will ever enjoy the glorious presence and blissful society of the Lord Jesus, in mansions of endless felicity. “So shall we ever be with the Lord.” “Where I am,” says Christ, “there shall also my servant be.” And again, “Father, I will that they also whom thou

hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." This is heaven, the glorious habitation of the redeemed.

To enjoy sweet communion with a glorified Saviour, is to be in a state of perfect happiness. This unspeakable blessedness awaits all the friends of Jesus in a world of glory. O happy thought!

When the bright morning of the resurrection shall dawn upon our enraptured souls, we shall behold, with our bodily eyes, that Saviour who once left the realms of bliss and poured out his precious blood on Calvary for our redemption. How lovely and attractive will he appear then as our Redeemer! How will his glory shine in the celestial sanctuary! And how will our souls burn with seraphic love, and rise in adoration and praise when we shall behold him as he is, on his heavenly throne, radiant in glory; when we shall see his hands and feet, and side and head, which were once wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; when we shall forever bask in the light of his life-giving countenance, and taste through eternity the sweetness of his immortal love!

What fountains of joy and rivers of pleasure will emanate from his blissful presence to exhilarate our happy spirits while eternal ages roll on!

Dear believer, in a little while your eyes shall
behold the King in his beauty, and the glorious
land that is afar off.

"A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land you on fair Canaan's coast;
Then you shall sing the song of grace,
And see your Saviour face to face."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERPETUITY OF BLISS.

"And they shall reign forever and ever."—REV. xxii. 5.

"O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss, is bliss."

THE glory of Immanuel's land will shine with increasing splendor through eternity. The bliss of heaven is eternal. This stamps an infinite value on all celestial enjoyments. How noble are those pleasures which are to endure forever! Such are the pleasures which are at God's hand. They never fade. Forever is attached to every enjoyment in Immanuel's land. Eternity is the measure of the saint's bliss. "And they shall reign forever and ever."

That happy land which we have been describing in this little volume is an eternal world. It is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. How different from this earthly abode are those bright mansions in our Father's kingdom! How fleeting are the pleasures of time! This world itself, with all its

grandeur, is passing away. Mutability, and decay and dissolution are indelibly written on all beneath the skies. Every object around us feels the withering touch of time, and fades beneath its corroding energy. The proudest monuments of antiquity have crumbled into dust, and the most powerful nations and cities of other days have been swept from the face of the earth, and over them oblivion hangs its dismal mantle. But eternity is inscribed on the gates of Paradise; and an eternal weight of glory crowns all the inhabitants of Immanuel's land. There they will ever dwell in an eternity of bliss. O what ineffable delight must spring up in the souls of the redeemed in glory, when they contemplate eternity! How sweet will that solemn word be to those happy spirits before the throne! As they look forward into the boundless ocean, they see—they fear no end to their bliss. While ages of glory roll on, the happiness will be unbounded, and eternal. When millions of ages shall have run their ample round, the inhabitants of Immanuel's land will still be young in immortality, and before them will still roll an eternity of glory. The mansions of our Father's house are eternal. The blessedness—the joy—the glory—the rest—the employment—the society of Immanuel's land are also as lasting as eternity itself. Let that solemn word eternity,

impress upon your mind the importance of salvation. If you are saved, it is with an everlasting salvation; if you are lost, you are lost FOR-EVER!

Said a dear dying saint to the writer, as she gave her parting look, "Think often of Eternity; that short word, Eternity! Oh! what does it not comprehend?"

We would also entreat you with the utmost compassion for your immortal soul, to "think often of Eternity." Eternity is yours; you are an heir of immortality. You must soon enjoy a perpetuity of bliss or of woe. O be entreated to forsake the world and cleave closely to Jesus! Live to Him who loved you with an everlasting love, and when death shall terminate your earthly course, the portals of heaven will open for your reception, and eternity, with all its untold glories will burst upon your ransomed spirit, and you shall be ever with the Lord.

CONCLUSION.

HEAVENLY MEDITATION.

"There is a place of sacred rest,
Far, far beyond the skies.
Where beauty smiles eternally,
And pleasure never dies.

O, MY soul, rise on the wings of meditation, and survey the glories of Immanuel's land! Look beyond the dim visions of mortality—beyond the swellings of Jordan—beyond the gloomy grave, and behold, with the eye of faith, those delectable mountains where shines the city of our God in more than earthly splendor; and where millions of happy saints are to reign in glory, while infinite ages roll away. This is our happy dwelling place—our Father's house. How brightly shine those celestial mansions irradiated by the glory of Immanuel! No cloud rests on these peaceful dwellings. There all is light and joy. Our Heavenly Father is there; and in his gracious smile there is joy unspeakable and full of glory. There we shall rest in Abraham's bosom. There, we shall dwell with that Friend who "loveth at all

times ;"—there the Saviour will be in our midst, to refresh our souls with the glorious manifestations of his eternal love. He will appear in perfect beauty from Zion's holy hill. There Sharon's lovely rose will bloom in everlasting day.

"Oh ! blessed Spirit, to my heart
This dear celestial flower impart ;
With joy I'll prize the Saviour here,
Then go to heaven and view him there."

In glory, Christ shall appear in all the loveliness of his person and character. The presence of Him who loved us, and gave himself for us, will make a sweet, glorious heaven indeed. Clad in the spotless robes of redeeming righteousness, we shall follow the Lamb to living fountains of waters—to perennial streams of pleasures—to boundless oceans of joys; and in the enjoyment of the Saviour's presence we shall be perfectly happy. Within us, all will be peace; around us, all will be glorious.

Immanuel's land is a place of unfading beauty. Eternal spring blooms in the realms of endless day.

"How unlike this state below !
There the flowers unwithering blow
There no chilling blasts annoy,
All is love, and bloom, and joy."

How sweet for the weary Christian pilgrim,

while passing through this wilderness scene, to think of that blessed abode! Dear follower of Jesus, meditate much on heaven—your happy home. Think of the rapturous delight you must experience in the courts of Paradise, while vast eternity glides along. O, what ecstatic joy must reign in the ransomed family of the Lord when they are admitted to see the King in his beauty;—when they come to dwell forever in the Paradise of God! With joy anticipate that glorious hour, when your happy spirit, freed from its clayey tabernacle, shall take its flight to those pure regions of bliss, where it shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

“ Oh, glorious hour, it comes with speed!
When we, from sin and darkness freed,
Shall see the God who died for man,
And praise him more than angels can.”

Live with heaven always in view. Endeavor to obtain a glimpse of the happy land, and in a little while you will have reached the blissful coast. You will soon enjoy the refreshing breezes of the saint's rest. One step more and you will have gained the happy shores of Immanuel's land, where you shall tread with your Redeemer the ceaseless round of eternity.

In view of such blessedness, who would not exclaim in joyful tones, “ Come, Lord Jesus.

Come quickly." O, that the happy hour was come when we shall rest with Jesus in the Paradise of God!

In the blessed hope of a glorious immortality, let us look beyond this dying world, and gaze on the glories of our heavenly home, till hope is turned into fruition, and faith into vision. Let us long for the sight of that blissful city—that happy home in which we are to spend a glorious eternity.

And now, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Hoping to meet you on the shores of Immanuel's land, where the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of waters; where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes; and where we shall sing the song of redeeming love through countless ages of glory. I would, till then, leave you in the tender and compassionate arms of Jesus, the Friend of Sinners.

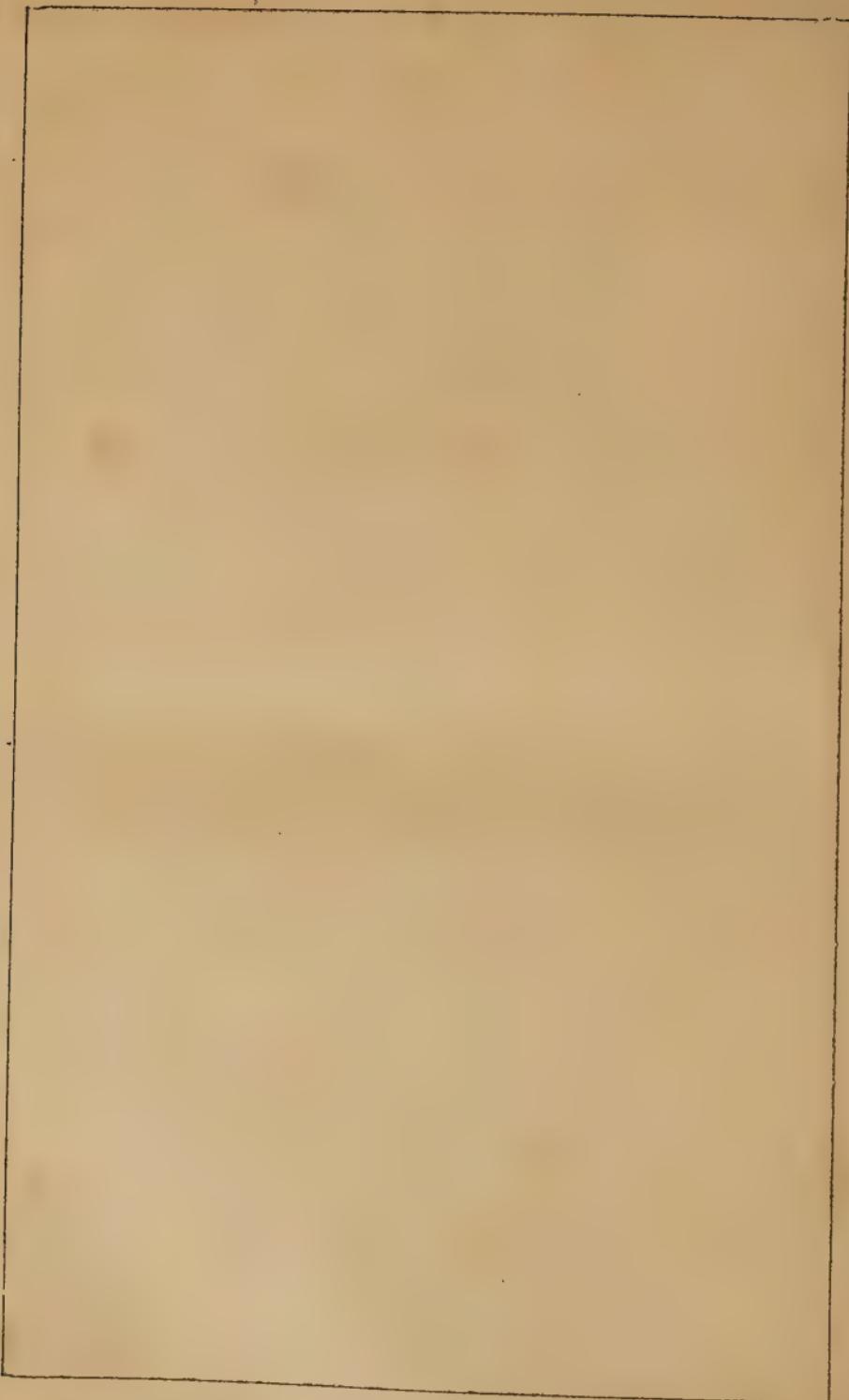
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Would God I were with thee!
Oh that my sorrows had an end,
Thy joys that I might see!
Thy walls are made of precious stone,
Thy bulwarks diamond square;

Thy gates are made of Orient pearl;
O God, if I were there!

O happy harbor of God's saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrows can be found,
No grief, no care, no toil.
No dimming cloud o'ershadows thee;
No gloom nor darksome night,
But every soul shines as the sun,
For God himself gives light.

Lord, in my forehead plant thy name.
And take me hence away,
That I may dwell with thee in bliss,
And sing thy praise for aye!
Jerusalem! my happy home,
O how I long for thee!
Then shall my labors have an end,
When once thy joys I see."

THE END.



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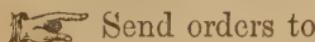
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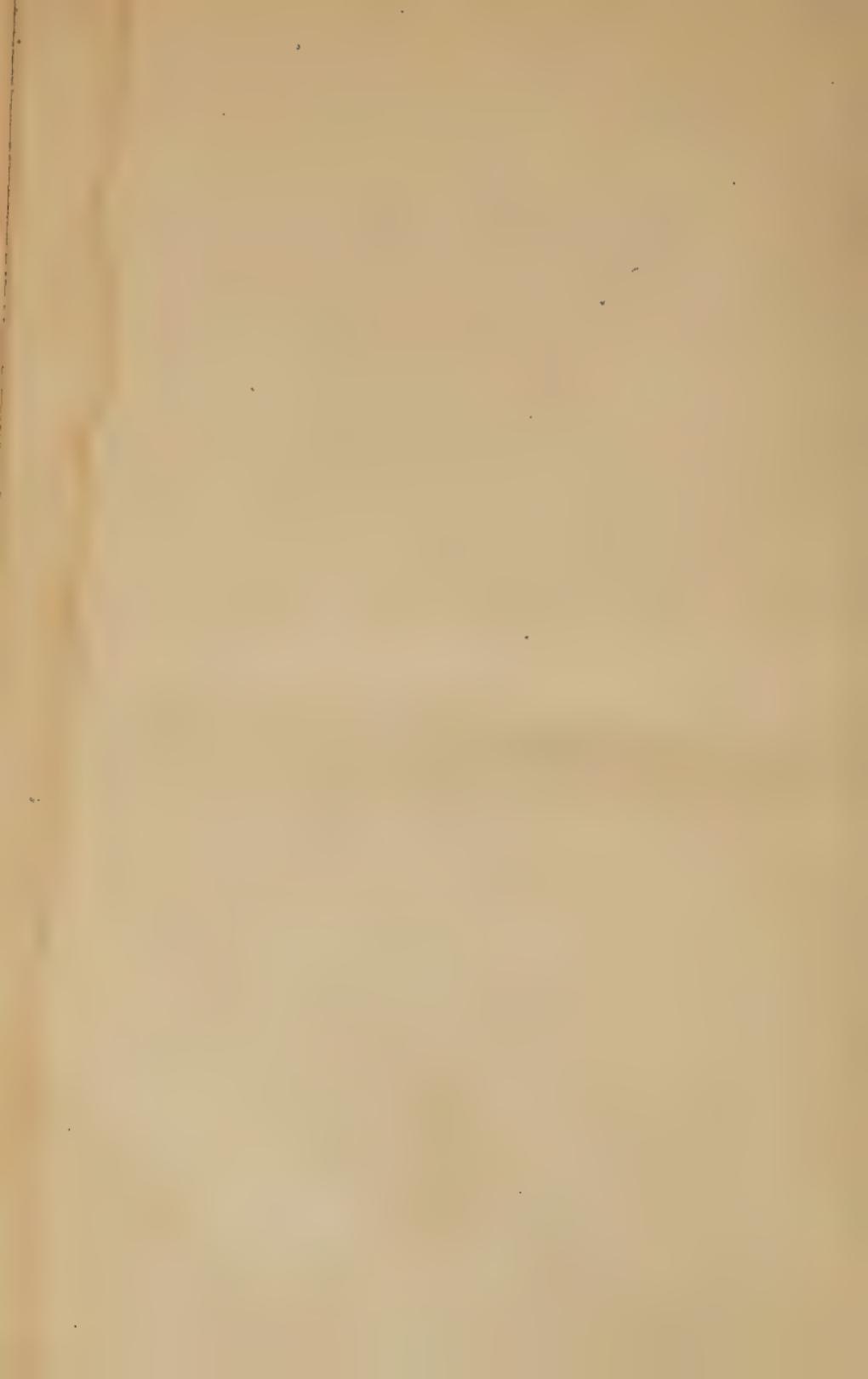
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